

## THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY (I Corinthians 12:31-14:1)

Disagreement in the kingdom of God on earth is excusable - lovelessness is not. God can and does bless people with seemingly different views - Reform or Arminian, charismatic or not, you might sprinkle or dip, have elder or congregational rule, be an expository or "suppository" preacher (you know, wait for the "Holy Goose"), Republican or Democrat - but, He never blesses lovelessness! If you want to grow up, you better get used to that.

Love is "the more excellent way" (I Cor 12:31). In Christ, we see not only "Who" love is, but "How" love lives. We see Jesus patiently loving the slow-learning disciples, kindly loving the outcasts of His day, un-  
enviously loving those with earthly glory, humbly loving those in error... need I go on to illustrate each of Paul's examples in verses 4-7?

None of us is born with this kind of love, but each believer is born again with it. We become what we receive. When we put faith in Christ as Savior and Lord, we received Him - Perfect Love Itself! Just as we could easily take out the word "love" and insert the word "Jesus" in these verses and do no injustice to the text, we could just as easily take out the word "love" and insert our names and still tell the truth! This is the new creation, the true self, the Christ-in-me person I have been created and re-created to be. I may not feel like it, act like it, look like it or be experiencing much of it - but it is who I am in Christ nonetheless.

This one time, deliberate, decisive choice to receive the love of God in Christ also calls for a daily, moment-by-moment, non selective readiness to know and express this more excellent way in all of its fullness. It is a calling to present ourselves to God and regularly get lost in His perfect love for us. To know we are being perfectly loved is to see all of His directives to be trustworthy for action. It is also a calling to present ourselves to others. Since the love of God is not about self-containment or self-preservation, we empty ourselves of our concerns (Christ has that covered for us!) and take on the concerns of those around us. Now we are looking WITH love, not FOR it. Finally, it is a calling to give specific presents of love in order to meet "the need of the moment" (Eph 4:29). We "pursue love" (I Cor 14:1), not to find it so much as to express it in the concretized ways Paul states... patience, kindness, humility, hope, endurance....

This is the "more excellent way", the way of Christ, the way of love.



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## *Praise Reports & Prayer Requests*

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# GREETINGS

We hope to see many of you at our annual retreat here in Alachua February 15-17, 2013. I find great joy in seeing people we know from all around the country getting to know one another, sharing the fellowship of revelation, and bringing the best out of one another as we gather together under God and His Word. Details will be coming next month, but mark the dates. Reservation deadlines will be January 18th, 2013. A \$50.00 deposit is necessary to confirm a motel room and conference meals.

For those of you who listen to or download our messages online (or burn your own CD's...), we're in the process of transitioning from one website to another. For now, you can continue to use [www.stevepettitmessages.com](http://www.stevepettitmessages.com), but there may be issues with opening outlines and such for a little while longer. Hopefully, we'll have it in complete working order soon. Sorry for the inconvenience.

**One In Christ, Inc.**  
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Alachua, Florida 32615

*ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED*



# CALENDAR



## NOVEMBER

4,11,18,25 CCF  
7-10 Baton Rouge, LA (225-769-8844)  
13 Alachua Study

## DECEMBER

4 **Ocala Study** **\*\*NOTE CHANGE\*\***

## JANUARY

25-27 San Antonio, TX





## FEBRUARY

15-17 One In Christ Retreat, Alachua, Florida

## MARCH

1-3 Baton Rouge

## **PRAISE & PRAYER**

-  For God's Perfect Love in Christ
-  For those who express it to us
-  For others who do not yet know His Perfect Love
-  To be pure expressions of His Love

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