

BUT THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:13

Some people ask Jesus to come into their heart and become Christians that way. But I think I have always been in love with love. That's why I decided long ago to ask God to fill me with his love and to help me share it with others. I believe that's the way I became a Christian.

I was surprised when, the day after that prayer, I magically started becoming kinder. I came to be known as a friendly person. And I felt much loved.

In his book, *New Light on Depression*, Harold Koenig wrote, "Love—unconditional love—is the ultimate long-term antidote for depression, for at its core love is connected with faith and hope."

I always read unconditional love to mean the love we *receive* from God. However, I came to see how it's even more important to *give* love to others, in the way God teaches us to love. I truly believe that sharing God's unconditional love with others is the very best long-term antidote to depression. And yet, as flawed human beings none of us is capable of giving unconditional love in the way God does. Yet couldn't we—with God's help—try?

In a group I attended yesterday, the question arose: "When do you most feel God's love?" After reflecting for a while, my answer had to be that I feel God's love most when I share it with another. When I access the love that God has put inside me and share it with a person who needs it, I most feel God's love flowing through me. Love is an active emotion.

The way I see it, God's love shouldn't be kept static within us. What good is it to keep it sitting in our heart, not feeding a person who might be hungering for it? It needs to be kept alive, ready to share. The love we have could be what the people around us most need.

The magical thing is that when we share God's love with those who need it, his love returns to us. Like a bouncing ball, the love we give is the love we receive back. Such sharing can bring incomparable joy.

marja