



Introduction to Love's Golden Treasures

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While listening to the radio one day ... I heard ...

Some say Love, it is a river, that drowns the tender reed.
Some say Love, it is a razor, that leaves your soul to bleed.
Some say Love, it is a hunger, an endless aching need;
I say Love, it is a flower, and you its only seed.

It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance.
It's the dream afraid of waking that never takes the chance.
It's the one who won't be taken who cannot seem to give,
And the soul afraid of dying that never learns to live.

When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long,
And you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong,
Just remember in the winter far beneath the bitter snows
Lies the seed that with the sun's Love ...

in the spring becomes the rose.

The Rose – by Bette Midler

Love—nothing else really matters.

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Full Introduction



1968 - Capt. Bucher & his ship the [USS Pueblo](#) kidnapped by N. Korea. Held a year. Bucher was forced to LIE to save his men. **What would you do?** Contrasting four ethical systems and the "absolutes" therein, esp. Truth and Love, *where* is the absolutely RIGHT choice?

Christian ETHICS is the quest for God's will this side of heaven, and *TIME* itself plays a part in the determination of rightness.

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A. Love—Makes the World Go Round

Love—we have always sensed and known something, even as an infant, and yet we spend the rest of our lives learning. Similar to a million songs and poems on Love, in all the languages of the world, and yet unique—precious in its gentle determination—Bette Midler’s 1979 song “The Rose,” a classic now after only twenty years, captures some of the hard wrought golden essence of Love. Love is connected to God and eternity, and on earth Love becomes the term of choice for the deepest and most lasting affection within our heart for a loved one. In our family and friends, Love appreciates like a golden treasure trove, and we hope in heaven’s reunions.

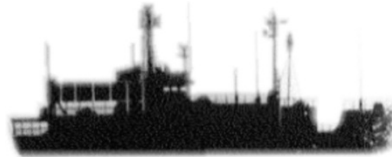
While we treasure Love, we also learn early that much of the world assaults Love, most often in dilemmas caused by evil. Evil assaults Love. When evil comes, the intelligible ethical force of Love is—often—tossed overboard. Love struggles to find away, and so few write about Love in ethics. Not all evil, but the grossest of evil sends Love out in a longboat to drift away from any kind of ethical practicality. Too often, Love is stranded on an island separated from any kind of easy access to the continents of ethical practicality, and often stranded in the academic literature on ethics.

We clash Love with evil in order to “grasp” the practicality of Love.¹

So we begin—Would you lie to save life? How can a Christian justify a lie? That question forces us to earth. Would you lie to save the life of your child, your little boy or baby girl? The person who would *not* think about lying to save their own child does not deserve to have children, does not know much about Love, and certainly becomes the fundamentalist fanatic we all fear—in *all* the religions of the world. Yet, there are some Christian scholars who argue for Truth at the expense of life without a pivotal place for Love. Radical fundamentalists and some of their scholars claim Love as they would an island, as a nice place to visit, like a vacation paradise, but for them Love has no use on the mainland of ethical practicality.

Yet—for most—Love makes the world go round.

In 1968, Commander Lloyd M. “Pete” Bucher of USS *Pueblo* was forced to lie to save the lives of his men; he saw no other way, and we did not either. In this introduction, we give you our *claims* about why that was the best choice inside of Love’s golden treasures, and in the following



¹ D. A. Carson, “On Distorting the Love of God,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 156-621 (January 1999): 12. This is article one in a four-part series, “The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God,” delivered by the author as the W. H. Griffith Thomas Lectures at Dallas Theological Seminary, February 3-6, 1998. After outlining how our American culture has distorted a biblical view on Love, D. A. Carson concluded, “Christian faithfulness calls for our growing in the grasp of what it means to confess that God is Love.”

seventeen chapters we detail the complexities of Love that *prove* our claims over three other ethical systems. Sometimes we indicate how the principles cross most religious boundaries. One concept unique to this book is how teleology (ends) plays a vital role in Love and making choices, and how we must take consequences and even heaven into consideration to determine the absolutely “right” choice in perfect Love. Generally, and given great and absolute differences, that is true for most of the world’s great religions, but that is especially so for Christianity where our hope in heaven should actually affect the “rightness” of a choice.



B. Love—What Is It?

What is Love? Beyond 1 Corinthians 13 and our own hearts, several paths intersect between the theologians, philosophers, poets, and song writers, all of which contribute to Love’s vitality, liveliness and wealth. See a good bibliography at my web site:

www.PreciousHeart.net/Main_Archives/Love_Archive/Love_Bib.htm

There are many sources from a wide range of theologians and philosophers, several contributing substantially and uniquely.²

² See Benjamin B. Warfield, “The Terminology of Love in the New Testament,” *The Princeton Theological Review* (Pt. 1 January, Pt 2 April 1918); a section called “Law of Love” in John F. Walvoord’s article, “Law in the Book of Romans: Part 2,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 94:375 (July 1937): 281-295; a sub-section on “Love” in Lewis Sperry Chafer’s article, “Part 3: Biblical Theism—The Attributes of God (Concluded),” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Volume 96:381 (January 1939); John F. Walvoord’s article, “Series in Christology-Part 2: The Preincarnate Son of God,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 104:414 (April 1947): 154-169; Lewis Sperry Chafer, “A Love Story Infinitely True” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 104:414 (April 1948): 134-143; Kenneth S. Wuest, “Four Greeks Words for Love,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 116:463 (July 1959): 241-248; D. A. Carson, “On Distorting the Love of God,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 156-621 (January 1999): 3-12; “God is Love,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 156-622 (April 1999): 131-142; “Love of God and Sovereignty,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 156-623 (July 1999): 259-271; “God’s Love and God’s Wrath,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 156-624 (October 1999): 387-398.

Saint Thomas Aquinas, (1225-1274) *St. Thomas Aquinas on Aristotle’s Love and Friendship, Ethics* (Providence College Press, 1951; 132p.); Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), *On Loving God (De Diligendo Deo)*; Cistercian Publications, 1995; 219p.); Vincent Brümmer, *The Model of Love—a Study in Philosophical Theology* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993; 249p.); Leo F. Buscaglia, *Love* (C. B. Slack, 1972; 147p.); Donald A. Carson, *Love in Hard Places* (Crossway Books, 2002; 207p.) and *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God* (Crossway, 2000; 93p.); Haridas Chaudhuri, *The Philosophy of Love* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987; 144p.); Ilham Dilman, *Love—Its Forms, Dimensions, and Paradoxes* (St. Martin’s Press, 1998; 239p.); Gerard Egan, *The Skilled Helper* (Brooks/Cole Publishing, 1994); Nancy Eisenberg, *Empathy and Related Emotional Responses* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989); Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Friendship and Love* (H. Altemus, 1896; 47p.); Reuben Fine, *The Meaning of Love in Human Experience* (Wiley, 1985; 422p.); Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (Harper, 1956; 133p.); Saint Gertrude (1256-1302), *The Herald of Divine Love (Legatus divinae pietatis)*; Paulist Press, 1993, 259p.); James Gills, *Love—Fulfilling the Ultimate Quest* (Love Press, 1993); Elinor Glyn, *The Philosophy of Love* (Author’s Press, 1923; 251p.); Leo Hebraeus (d. 1535), *The Philosophy of Love (Dialoghi D’amore)*; Soncino Press, 1937; 468p.); Robert O. Johann, *The Meaning of Love—an Essay Towards a Metaphysics of Intersubjectivity* (Newman Press, 1955; 133p.); Robert L. Katz, *Empathy—Its Nature and*

[Footnote continued on next page – please enjoy ...]

From theology, James Moffatt's magisterial classic *Love in the New Testament* chronicles the meaning of Love from the ancients, including the non-personal God of the Greeks and passionate adoration of *bhakti* in the Hindus to the personal nature of Love that came of age with a birth in Bethlehem, from which we mark our calendar. Moffatt said,

When Christianity begins, we find men of the Church conscious of a new relationship to God and to one another, for which the most central and simple term was 'Love.'... Jesus had extended the term 'neighbor' till it included anyone near and in need, and he had also widened the term

Uses (Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); Ellen Karolina Sofia Key, *Love and Ethics* (B. W. Huebsch, 1911; 73p.); Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-1855), *Works of Love* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1946, 1st 1847; 317p.); Daphne Rose Kingma, *A Garland of Love—Daily Reflections on the Magic and Meaning of Love* (Conari Press, 1992) and *The Future of Love: the Power of the Soul in Intimate Relationships* (Doubleday, 1998); Alfred Margulies, *The Empathic Imagination* (Norton, 1989); Rollo May, *Love and Will* (Norton, 1969; 352p.); several other powerful books); Ashley Montagu, *The Meaning of Love* (Julian Press, 1953; 248p.); James Park, *Authentic Love: an Existential Vision* (Existential Books, 1976; 232p.); Clark H. Pinnock and Robert C. Brow *Unbounded Love: a Good News Theology for the 21st Century* (InterVarsity; Paternoster Press, 1994; 189p.); John Polkinghorne, *The Work of Love—Creation as Kenosis* (W.B. Eerdmans, 2001; 210p.); Kenneth S. Pope, *On Love and Loving* (Jossey-Bass, 1980; 377p.); Carl R. Rogers, *A Way of Being* (Houghton Mifflin, 1980) and "Empathic—An Unappreciated Way of Being," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* (1975: 2-10; The classic statement on empathy); Abraham Schmitt, *The Art of Listening with Love* (Word Books, 1977; 174p.); Isidor Schneider, *The World of Love* (G. Braziller, 1964; 2 vols.); Edith Scholl, *In the School of Love—an Anthology of Early Cistercian Texts* (Cistercian Publications, 2000; 180p.; from Cistercian monks and nuns who lived in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries); Irving Singer, *The Nature of Love* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1984-1987; 3 vol.) and *The Pursuit of Love* (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1994; 182p.); Esther Singleton, *Love in Literature and Art* (Dodd, Mead & Co., 1901; 289p.); Gary Smalley, *Making Love Last Forever* (Word Pub., 1996; 279p.); Alan Soble, *Eros, Agape, and Philia—Readings in the Philosophy of Love* (Paragon House, 1989; 305p.) and *The Structure of Love* (Yale Univ. Press, 1990; 374p.); Pitirim Aleksandrovich Sorokin (1889-1968), *The Ways and Power of Love—Types, Factors, and Techniques of Moral Transformation* (Beacon Press, 1954; 552p.); Edith R. Stauffer, *Unconditional Love and Forgiveness* (Psychosynthesis International, 1987; 224p.); Stendhal (pseud. Marie-Henri Beyle, 1783-1842) *On Love* (Da Capo Press, 1983; 420p.); Robert J. Sternberg and Michael L. Barnes, *The Psychology of Love* (Yale Univ. Press, 1988; 383p.); Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *On Love & Happiness* (Harper & Row, 1984; 100p.); Mother Teresa, *No Greater Love* (New World Library, 1997; 206p.); Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), *Perfect Love—the Meditations, Prayers, and Writings of Teresa of Avila* (NY: Doubleday, 1995; 152p.); Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice—Ontological Analyses and Ethical Applications* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1954; 127p.); André Tridon, *Psychoanalysis and Love* (Brentano's, 1922; 333p.); Edward Collins Vacek, *Love, Human and Divine—the Heart of Christian Ethics* (Georgetown Univ. Press, 1994; 352p.); David S. Viscott, *I Love You, Let's Work It Out* (Simon and Schuster, 1987; 287p.); Bob Wagoner, *The Meanings of Love—an Introduction to Philosophy of Love* (Praeger, 1997; 149p.); Neil Clark Warren, *Finding the Love of Your Life* (Pocket Books, 1992; 166p.); Frederick D. Wilhelmsen, *The Metaphysics of Love* (Sheed and Ward, 1962; 159p.); Clifford Williams, *On Love and Friendship—Philosophical Readings* (Jones and Bartlett, 1995; 389p.); Marianne Williamson, *Enchanted Love—the Mystical Power of Intimate Relationships* (Simon & Schuster, 1999); Fritz Wittels (1880-1950), *Critique of Love* (Macaulay Company, 1929; 317p.); Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love* (Beacon Hill, 1972); Spiros Zodhiates, *To Love is to Live—An Exposition of 1 Corinthians 13, Based upon the Original Greek* (Eerdmans, 1967).

‘Love’ till it embraced personal duty towards an opponent.... it was in their group that for the first time the word was heard, *God is Love*.³

Moffatt summed up his study, noting how some portions of Christianity can only be understood from the “inside” of the Christian faith.⁴ We Love God because He first loved us, and through that experience our natural human Love gets turbo-charged in the first century. Moffatt technically linked Love to our relationship with God. To that end, we have not seen an equal to Moffatt’s classic and doubt it will be surpassed, if ever, in this kind of detail on the meaning of Love for the New Testament Christian. It is sad that no one has made a more readable version, and sadder that it is not used more.

We are to Love God and each other. The Law of Moses said we should Love our neighbor as ourself, and Christ added that we should Love as He loved us—sacrificing his life for us.⁵ The cross became the symbol of the Love of Christ, and he is our example. No greater Love will ever be seen, but we try, and we *can* always Love, at least a little.

Anders Nygren’s classic *Agape and Eros* highlighted “sacrificial” Love and seemed long overdue, bridging together some theology and philosophy, like the “mutual” Love of Daniel Day Williams, and the Love as “equal regard” of Gene Outka.⁶ But few can match C. S. Lewis’ small and seminal *The Four Loves*, a delicate treatise on affection, friendship, eros,



³ James Moffatt, *Love in the New Testament* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1929; 333p.): 32-33. “Nevertheless, it was in their group that for the first time the word was heard, *God is Love*; and outsiders who marked their warm fellowship instinctively said, not yet in any ironical sense, ‘How these Christians Love one another!’ ‘Love’ may not be the invariable term, but upon the whole it is distinctive of the new faith and fellowship in these circles scattered round the Mediterranean basin.” Love caps mine.

⁴ James Moffatt, *Love in the New Testament*: 321-322, last sentence, “Christianity was originally understood by its adherents to be a religion of Love, the emphasis now falling on the term ‘religion.’ Hedonists and humanitarians had claimed in their respective fashions that ‘Love is God, or god,’ ... avowing that this Love is the one thing in the wide world which they are prepared to label as divine. But Christians in the first generation had not so learned their lesson. From the first, as we have seen, their reading of life was more profound. In history and experience we observe this community or company moving forward as they believe and receive the Love of God has for them.... According to the NT the Church began (and if it fails to continue thus, it soon will end) by confessing *God is Love*, but only in the spirit of adoring reference which inspired the song of praise to *Him who loves us and has loosed us from our sins by shedding his own blood ... to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever: Amen.*” Love caps mine.

⁵ Respectively, Leviticus 19:18 and John 15:12.

⁶ Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros* (Westminster Press, 1953); Daniel Day Williams, *The Spirit and the Forms of Love* (Harper & Row, 1968); and Gene Outka, *Agape—An Ethical Analysis* (Yale Univ. Press, 1972).

and charity. On “charity” or *agape* Love, Lewis waxes poetic in a garden analogy:

It is no disparagement to a garden to say that it will not fence and weed itself, nor prune its own fruit trees, nor roll and cut its own lawns. A garden is a good thing but that is not the sort of goodness it has. It will remain a garden, as distinct from a wilderness, only if someone does all these things to it. Its real glory is quite a different kind. The very fact that it needs constant weeding and pruning bears witness to that glory. It teems with life. It glows with colour and smells like heaven and puts forward at every hour of a summer day beauties which man could never have created and could not even, on his own resources, have imagined.... And when the garden is in its full glory the gardener’s contributions to that glory will still have been in a sense paltry compared with those of nature. Without life springing from the earth, without rain, light and heat descending from the sky, he could do nothing. When he has done all, he has merely encouraged here and discouraged there, powers and beauties that have a different source. But his share, though small, is indispensable and laborious. When God planted a garden He set a man over it and set the man under Himself. When He planted the garden of our nature and caused the flowering, fruiting Loves to grow there, He set our will to “dress” them. Compared with them it is dry and cold. And unless His grace comes down, like the rain and the sunshine, we shall use this tool to little purpose. But its laborious—and largely negative—services are indispensable. If we were needed when the garden was still Paradisal, how much more now when the soil has gone sour and the worst seeds seem to thrive on it best? But heaven forbid we should work in the spirit of prigs and Stoics. While we hack and prune we know very well that what we are hacking and pruning is big with a splendour and vitality which our rational will could never of itself have supplied. To liberate that splendour, to let it become fully what it is trying to be, to have tall trees instead of scrubby tangles, and sweet apples instead of crabs, is part of our purpose.⁷

Lewis proceeds from there to show how the other three natural Loves can become inordinate and deplete us, sometimes ending with a person unable to “feel towards God so warm a sensible emotion as they feel for the earthly Beloved.”⁸

Agape appears in its various forms over 300 times in the New Testament, and Love appears in a cursory survey over 20,000 times in over 3,000

⁷ Love caps mine. C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1960; 192p.): 163-165.

⁸ C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*: 170.

articles in 225 separate theological journals over the last 50 years in the Evangelical Theological Journal Library CD; nearly every area of Christian theology is significantly touched by that Love.⁹ Our natural Love can compete with the Love we share with God and for God, as Gift-Love, and the best is seen and felt when our natural Loves become super-charged toward others when energized by Gift-Love. After that, Lewis makes his golden distinctions.

God is Love.... We begin at the real beginning, with Love as the Divine energy. This primal Love is Gift-Love. In God there is no hunger that needs to be filled, only plenteousness that desires to give....

Divine Love does not *substitute* itself for the natural—as if we had to throw away our silver to make room for the gold. The natural Loves are summoned to become modes of Charity while also remaining the natural Loves they were.

We were made for God. Only by being in some respect like Him, only by being a manifestation of His beauty, lovingkindness, wisdom or goodness, has any earthly Beloved excited our Love. It is not that we have loved them too much, but that we did not quite understand what we were loving. It is not that we shall be asked to turn from them, so dearly familiar, to a Stranger. *When we see the face of God we shall know that we have always known it.* He has been a party to, has made, sustained and moved moment by moment within, all our earthly experiences of innocent Love....

He can awake in man, towards Himself, a supernatural Appreciative Love. This is of all gifts the most to be desired. Here, not in our natural Loves, nor even in ethics, lies the true centre of all human and angelic life. With this all things are possible.

And with this, where a better book would begin, mine must end. I dare not proceed. God knows, not I, whether I have ever tasted this Love.¹⁰

Lewis ends with a mystery, and we saw some gold in that garden and are the richer for his green thumb. One has to dig deep to articulate the best of Love, even though literacy is not required to enjoy the best of Love.

⁹ *Theological Journal Library CD* (version 5, www.glaxie.com, also sold from the ETS site for direct order, www.etsjets.org): *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1934-2001), *Grace Journal* (1960-1972), *Grace Theological Journal* (1980-1972), *Trinity Journal* (1980-2000), *Master's Seminary Journal* (1990-1999), *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (1995-2001), *Westminster Theological Journal* (1960-2000), *Emmaus Journal* (1991-2001), *Michigan Theological Journal* (1990-1994), *Journal of Christian Apologetics* (1997-1998), *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* (1988-2000), *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal* (1995-2001), and *Conservative Theological Journal* (1997-1999).

¹⁰ C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1960; 192p.): 175-176, 183-184, 190-192. Love caps and last italics only mine.



C. Love & Krakatoa—Love Will Find a Way

Some Christians can be heard to say, “Love the sinner and hate the sin,” but that is never said if the sinner just raped your daughter or killed your father. In very rare times we hear of folks, super-religious folks, *claiming* to forgive, but we know of none who can truly *Love* the rapist or murderer of a loved one in the same manner as they Love the loved one, and the Bible does not require it. We claim to Love all, and somehow want to, but the word *Love* is shunned like a ghost when we move from the sunshine into the darkness. We cannot Love the murderer at the *time* he is raping and killing, not immediately (if ever), but we embrace Love as the very source of our heartbrokenness to the victim, especially if a loved one.

In tragedy, Love is split apart at the atomic level: our *withholding* of Love from a murderer splits apart from the *beholding* of Love toward the loved one. An ethical no-man’s land grows between the *withholding* and *beholding* like a volcano—Kakatoa, east of Sumatra and Java, a volcano blows up. Never again, this side of heaven, shall that Love *withheld* and Love *beheld* find unison. The volcano devastates, confuses, clouds the sky with grieving ash; both the night stars and the daytime sun cannot be found. In hell there is no color or guiding light, and the heart knows no words and no language but the universal scream for mercy. The volcano permanently divides, shifting even continental plates and swallowing common sense. Love toward the murderer of your child—not in this lifetime! Love toward your murdered child—herald!—the dear Love is *causing* the grief! And to compare the Loves *withheld* and *beheld* in the same sentence is a near sacrilege to the Love of the child, even a sacrilege to Love’s eternal golden treasures.

Love—what a mysterious source of great pain and great treasure.

What is Love’s place in ethics? In a way, all decisions are made in Love. A Christian related to God cannot make *any* choice that is not somehow connected to Love. Yet you do not see that in the popular Christian literature, other than bland and nearly useless platitudes like, “Love the sinner and hate the sin”—a sickening statement that pretends piety, but vomits hypocrisy. And I used think that, too, until after a decade as a prison chaplain. There is much more to both sin and Love. The ethical struggle is about helping us to see that *all* islands are connected to *all* of the continents underneath the water and at the core of the earth. Even Krakatoa is connected to us in Texas deep down at the core of the earth. Only the water of life’s storms separate the islands from the mainland, and the water only separates on the surface of the earth—not underneath, not deep down where absolutes are all united in God’s character.

Herein, a U.S. Navy man took Love and Truth seriously, defying death. After hijacking the USS *Pueblo* off the high seas and after torture and threatening to kill Commander Lloyd M. “Pete” Bucher in 1968, the North Koreans threatened to kill his crew. To protect his crew, Bucher signed a false confession to save the lives of his crew—lying to save life—and we stand with him today. There is no greater Love than to give one’s life for another. After that, what is the place of sacrificing your moral code to save life? Is lying to save life in Bucher’s dilemma an actual sacrifice of one’s moral code?

Is there a better choice than Bucher’s lie? What is the best choice?

Commander Bucher’s choice appears to be the best choice we could find, even these decades later. The full complexity of the decision is literally infinite, because a choice made in Love—any true Love—entails and operates to some degree *through* Love’s eternal nature. Eternity has no limits that we can fully discover much less define this side of heaven. Love and Truth get a boost in this book, because Love will find a way home.



D. Love *Over* Truth a Hard Choice

When Commander Bucher lied to save life, there is the appearance that he chose the greater good of Love *over* the lesser good of Truth. But that is deceptive, for there is no such thing as a purely *lesser* absolute, and so Bucher did not *really* choose Love *over* or *against* Truth. He chose Love at the expense of *some* Truth but not at the expense of all Truth, for Love is an integral part of the Truth of his dilemma right alongside the small Truth he sacrificed. We will be dissecting the Truth of his Love as well as the small Truth he sacrificed. To anyone who values absolutes, Love and Truth are the most important in human life, hardly without equal. Bucher chose Love over Truth, but not at the expense of all Truth and not because anyone wanted to choose Love over Truth or exclude any Truth—he did not *want* to lie.

Lying to save lives is a very hard *ethical* choice, because Love is truly chosen over Truth, but that choice is not necessarily the hardest *human* choice. Some choices are difficult to make because of our own deep-seated selfishness. We already know that there is no greater Love than to lay down one’s life for one’s family or a friend: the hard part is *the laying down* of one’s life. Laying down one’s life is vastly harder to do than merely lying, and all the more hard in proportion to how selfish one may be; but ethically, there is little difficulty, for we *should* lay down our life. Talking about it is easier than doing it, especially if one is a coward (something hard to know until that dreadful hour).

On the other hand, lying may be easier to do, humanly, especially if one is selfish and where ethics are no concern. But lying is hard to do if one is

moral, and harder to do in direct proportion to how moral and how courageous a person may be. That is what makes lying to save lives a hard ethical choice, as we will see in Commander Bucher's horrendous dilemma, where in a bargain, his choice to lie to save life in Love appears to save the lives of others. He struggled *because* he was a man of honor. Few in human history have had to deal with this kind of a dilemma predicated upon the pivotal nature of a simple *bargain* and its peculiarly narrow focus upon the absolutes of Love and Truth.

Among the treasures dug up below, one of the largest gold nuggets was the discovery that Love and Truth go together; not truly new in itself, but this gold nugget helped finance much more gold digging. We cannot fully separate Love and Truth, because no absolute can be fully separated from any other absolute, not any more than one can fully separate the hand from the arm of a man and he still be considered a whole man. The gold nugget is that we will *always* choose Love over Truth, and *never* choose Truth over Love—they go together, or Love carries what Truth it can.

All absolutes—if they be truly *absolute*—have their source in the nature of God's eternal life. All absolutes are united at the core of the earth. If there is an *appearance* of conflict on the surface of the raging high seas, in ethical maelstroms like Bucher's dilemma, Love is chosen in the windy hail storm over Truth. Love was chosen over Truth not because one *wanted* to or because it *was* absolutely "right," but because of the evil rain and to salvage life and because Love *was* and always will be the most significant part of the choice. In Bucher's dilemma, we could not find a way for Love to carry Truth all the way through, because of complexity, but we could still Love.

The point of order is that the *appearance* of a conflict of absolutes does not necessitate the *reality* of a conflict of absolutes. Bucher's dilemma does reveal the complexity of human dilemmas and the majesty of the criterion set by Jesus Christ's competence. Herein, we introduce faith as the engine of Love. Surely, as we will mention several times, we share many elements of Love with all the major religions of the world—gladly, hopefully. For example, Love in Islam is a high value, even at the heart of Islam and a supreme principle of creation.¹¹ Love is integral to the entire human race, sharing many similarities on the surface of the ocean, even through our absolute differences on God.

¹¹ Uwaymir Anjum, "Divine Love—The Heart of Islam, the Principle of Creation," *Al Jumuah* 19:03 (Ravi'ul Anwal 1428; March/April 2007; pub. Madison, WI, London, U.K., and Saudi Arabia; www.aljumuah.com): 22-35; see also, Joseph N. Bell, *Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam* (Albany, 1979). See the Quran, surah 2:222, "Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean."

We recognize that each major religion has its own absolutes that cross out several eternal values in other religions. There are absolute differences that cannot be reconciled, and yet we share many attributes of Love. Similar to all of the major religions in their exclusive elements, there is an element of faith that pumps up and energizes Love according to Christianity for the Christian. Christians start with John 3:16, usually, “For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Faith in God brings eternal dimensions to our earthly Love for God and others. In a sermon that used the analogy of the ocean ship’s anchor as the driving metaphor, Charles H. Spurgeon said it like this,

Have faith in God, for faith is in itself a virtue of the highest order. No virtue is more truly excellent than the simple confidence in the Eternal which a man is helped to exhibit by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Nay, not only is faith a virtue in itself, but it is the mother of all virtues. He that believeth becomes strong to labor, patient to suffer, fervent to Love, earnest to obey, zealous to serve. Faith is a root from which may grow all that can adorn the human character. So far from being opposed to good works, it is the ever-flowing fountain from whence they proceed. Take faith away from the professed Christian and you have cut the sinew of his strength, like Samson you have shorn him of his locks, and left him with no power either to defend himself or to conquer his foes. “The just shall live by faith,” — faith is essential to the vitality of Christianity, and anything which weakens that faith weakens the very mainspring of spiritual power.¹²

Whatever Love we have or hope to have this side of heaven, from a Christian perspective, that Love is short if it does *not* reach heaven while we are here on earth. Any Love we have and hope to have this side of heaven is made richer *when* our Christian faith in God through Jesus Christ is the anchor of our life.

Furthermore, on the surface waters where most of the major religions sail the trade lanes of life, the Love-over-Truth choice (as funny as that sounds) can never be replaced with a Truth-over-Love choice, because Love has living and eternal qualities that Truth does not (detailed later). When Truth is chosen it is united to Love, and Truth is at the same time the most loving choice. Because Love is more dynamic than Truth, there will never

¹² Charles H. Spurgeon, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Vol. 22, “The Anchor,” #1294, 5-21-1976: 350-365. See www.PreciousHeart.net/anchor.htm for that masterpiece. See also my book, *Crean Devotions—From the Hold of Charles H. Spurgeon, Master of Mariner Metaphors* (hopefully 2008).

be a time in which Truth is chosen *over* Love, because Love *always* flows under and over to *carry* Truth.

Love and Truth go together in the symbiosis of life and yet have different roles. Love has a unilateral influence over Truth, because there is a *time* differential between them. Truth has a static element to its declaration that Love does not have, for something *is* Truth or is not. Love has a dynamic, living, and organic element that Truth does not have, in that Love looks at the present and the future at the same *time*. We will clarify the complicating elements of the *time* differential as we go along, as well as how the eternity itself of Love affects the rightness of a choice and our ability.

In all of the ethical thunder storms around Bucher's horrendous dilemma, one complication stands out like a flaming lighthouse beacon for nearly all persons, like a lighthouse among the island chains of complexity warning of the rocky shoreline: we cannot escape our guilt for murder if we told the Truth and that Truth resulted in the murder of Bucher's crew. In other words, if all it took to save life was a small lie—*I was in Korean water*, instead of the truth—and we forfeited that lie and death resulted, it seems that we are somewhat guilty of murder right along with those who pulled the trigger. Moreover, this is true though saving life is *not* an absolute in itself. Love is the absolute, chosen over Truth, but not at the expense of all Truth and not without a deep-seated respect for Truth.

Love found a way, as Love is the absolute that drives us to save life.



E. Love's Defining Elements in an Evil Crisis

We *claim* here (*prove* later) that there are simple and complex absolutely right choices. Even elementary school children know some of these things. **One**, on simplicity—we can make some simple *absolutely* right choices like “not to steal.” **Two**, on complexity—no one can make many (if any) second-level *absolutely* right choices in perfect Love, because of the complexity of perfect Love itself and the complexity of approaching the competence of Jesus. In the major religions and apart from their differences, these two complexities apply to the highest ideals of perfect Love in most religions. We shall elaborate.

Conclusion One—Simplicity. We have a capacity to make simple absolutely right choices this side of heaven. Truth telling and avoiding stealing and murder are simple and first-level *absolutely* right choices. They are simple and first-level because *time* is not an essential element in the determination of the rightness of the choice. Because of the static nature of most Truth, there are absolutely right choices, and Love inheres throughout all Truth. Because we do not take the future into consideration for these

choices, telling the Truth and not stealing are—simply—first-level *absolutely* right choices. In other words, choosing not to steal and not to murder are simple first-level *absolutely* right choices; herein, Love is integrated with that choice, and *time* is of no concern. Love is not an obvious part of the simple choice, yet Love is integrated because of the nature of absolutes. Telling the Truth and not stealing both assume and *breathe* Love, because they are related to God and God’s Law. Not stealing and not murdering *are* Love, but more obviously they are the avoidance of evil.

Likewise, staying on the right side of the road, being honest at the check-out stand, sharing with the needy, visiting the poor, helping widows and orphans, and the like are simple “right” choices. But even these choices become complex with a single droplet of evil. Here is a real challenge. In the light of *perfect* Love, good driving and honesty and taking care of the poor (etc.) also become exceedingly complex when one adds a twinkle of consideration of consequences and a droplet of intentions. From simple to complex, if one helps the poor with even a micron of self-glorification, therein, that helping becomes tainted and ceases to be an *absolutely* “right” choice in perfect Love. Who is so pure? WWJD swallows its tongue here, as we will detail later. Nevertheless, such simple helping could remain *good* and *part* of perfect Love, for Love goes a long way, and any true Love is connected to eternal golden treasure.

Conclusion Two—Complexity. We are not competent enough to make many (if any) complex absolutely right choices in perfect Love this side of heaven. In the living of life, *telling the Truth* takes on a nearly infinite set of complexities when we ask for precision and when we define ourselves in terms of absolutes, and Truth takes on an infinity of facets when Love is made an integral part of Truth.

Let me explain. It is a simple-mindedly true statement that the U.S. White House is *white* colored. Yet what is *absolutely* white and *absolutely* a house? No one disputes the simple-mindedness or the Truth of the *whiteness* of the White House, not at length, not normal folks. Similarly, it is true that John and Jane are good persons, but the absoluteness of their goodness is impossible to measure, also something no one disputes. No one disputes the simple-mindedness of the *whiteness* of the White House, and likewise no one disputes the simple-minded observation that the *goodness* of John and Jane are impossible to fully measure.

What *is* disputed? What is disputed comes of age, stands up, and slaps our faces—like sheets of rain blasting over the bow on a stormy sea. The crisis of evil fires up and burns our hearts, and in the fire a single right choice is complicated beyond measure and at times appears impossible to

find. In the face of evil, too often, we get slapped across our ethical faces and sometimes burned—sometimes scarred for life.

Evil is the spur to most ethical studies.

Not only in evil or in crisis, but all choices are always complex when the full measure of the absolutes of Love and Truth are involved. All choices—happy or sad choices—whether made in happy-go-lucky times of joyful exuberance or made in times of the evil marauder, whatever, all choices are complex where Love is concerned. Here, Love and Truth work hand in hand and are inextricably linked together, and Truth is not the weaker brother or Love the greater absolute. What separates them on the concourse of life is their relationship to *time*, and Love carries Truth *all* of the time. Love is an eternal absolute, and therein—in the face of both evil and pleasant circumstances—we are always responsible and will be held somewhat accountable for all my efforts to find the *absolutely* “right” choice in perfect Love, which at the *same time* will be the whole Truth. We must meet all of the demands of Love and Truth in a perfect manner, or that choice is *not* absolutely “right.” Our criterion is the competence of Jesus Christ who *always* chose preciously unique absolutely “right” choices in perfect Love. His competence is the rock against which all Love and ethics must be hewn and benchmarked.

All of our choices are preciously unique, just as all of Jesus’ were (and are today), only ours are tainted and lack perfection. The uniqueness of each choice is part of the great treasure of human life and the wondrous beauty of a human choice. In every choice there is a magnificent and infinite symmetry that weaves itself throughout every choice—even through the future of that choice—culminating in chart 24 and the charts following that on the triune frames and intractable elements resident in a single choice. Human choices are golden treasures and the best parts of Love, one of kind every time for all time.

And though the uniqueness of every choice is a precious human gift, with Jesus as the majestic criterion, what man or woman’s choice is *absolutely* “right” in perfect Love? Excepting Jesus’ choice, no choice can be *absolutely* clean and pure, not this side of heaven, where *pure* also includes the thoughts and intents of the heart. For us, no one can make a second-level *absolutely* “right” choice where that also entails perfect Love, and the reason is because of the complexity of approaching the competence of Jesus.

Between conclusions one and two, *time* is crucial.

Because Jesus was able to make absolutely “right” choices in perfect Love, so then—and bedrock in this study—absolutely “right” choices *are* available to us. Jesus’ humanity demands that “right” choices are available to us. The availability of the formula for nuclear fusion does not mean that

everyone can make a nuclear reactor, and the formula existed 1,000 years ago. Our problem is finding the absolutely “right” choice in perfect Love, and it is a big problem—bigger than many radical fundamentalists will admit. The best we can do at times is approach the absolutely “right” choice in Love. Sometimes, like in Commander Bucher’s case, just finding one single *absolutely* “right” choice seems impossible, even decades later.

The good news is that we *can* always Love, for Love will find a way.

From the New Testament, Love makes more demands. We must now Love in heart and soul and intentions, and Love involves the next moment’s contemplation and involves some element of *time* in the consideration of the absolute “rightness” of the choice. The *time* element is usually hashed out in ethics in the terms *deontology* and *teleology*, and we will give them considerable time later. When Love is involved in the choice, as Love should always be, the consideration of the ends (and consequences) of your choice—the teleological—are an integral part of the determination of the absolute “rightness” of the choice.

Love is, at least, three-dimensional, encountering and negotiating all three dimensions of time past, present, and future at the same *time* for every single precious unique choice that we make in life. As we Love a loved one, Love embraces a past that informs the present, encounters all of the present assessments, and necessarily looks toward the future of the loved one—all at the same *time*. Likewise, at the same time, we are striving to Love better in the present and to grow in our ability to Love more effectively, efficiently, and more richly down the concourse of time. Love is always growing or refining itself, for the glory of Love is in its *living*.

Yet—at the same *time*—we slay a portion of Love’s power with words like *effective* and *efficient*, for Love’s golden treasure is the free flow from the heart in Love’s eternal connections to our loved ones and to God. We enjoy Love, and Love empowers to mighty feats of heart; but *efficient* Love strains our reason. When we move from Love to the analysis of Love, we lose something. We will elaborate on how enthralling, engrossing, and ethically vigorous Love is to all of life, efficient too, but most of all exhilarating. Love is tops, especially as Love finds a way home.

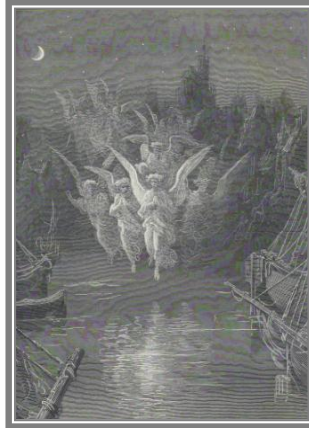


F. To the Reader—Master Illustrator Gustave Doré

In the majority, I used engravings from Gustave Doré, one of the world’s finest book illustrators and probably the most renowned illustrator of all time of spiritual and biblical themes. William Griffith said, “He seldom or never used a model; could not sketch from nature;... never retouched or considered his work after it was done; produced over a hundred thousand pictures—an average of six a day—was knighted, adored, scoffed

at and proclaimed the greatest illustrator of the Bible that ever lived.”¹³ Another reason I used Doré’s works is that they are in the public domain.

I was struck by the feeling in the works by Doré, even if weighted on the dark side, especially since we are struggling in the darkness to find the way of Love. A few illustrations directly reflect on the analogy of the moment, but mostly the illustrations reflect the feeling conveyed in the text. Check out Dan Malan’s biography, *Gustave Doré—Adrift on Dreams of Splendor*, a splendid title, I might add.¹⁴ For most Christians, most of the 19th and early 20th century images of the stories of the Bible come from the mind of Doré. The images linger today. Many times and unfortunately, the images linger without credit going to the artist who created them. In this book, we walk into uncharted territory, and Doré is a magnificent illustrator of the uncharted dark territories—spiritually speaking.



Throughout, the Old and New Testaments are referenced by OT and NT respectively. As you have already noticed, I have capitalized Love, Truth, and Responsibility throughout, to enhance their rhetorical impact in the battle ahead. At first, it might seem superfluous, yet this seemed worthy as we wrestled with the problems.

Love and Truth go hand in hand on the concourse of time and are absolutes that appear to conflict in Bucher’s dilemma. Around them this entire book revolves. We are trying to determine Love’s place *in* and *through* Bucher’s dilemma—his own dark hour—and how Love and Truth relate to each other. Even if we are unable to resolve the appearance of a conflict, Love and Truth do not actually conflict, and we will discover how Love finds a way in the darkness and through the conflict. Love, Truth, and Responsibility are golden treasures and make up many of the precious unique parts of our *character* here on earth, this side of heaven.

Love will find a way through the conflict, even a way home, whether or not Truth be used, because Love *carries* Truth—as we shall see.



¹³ William Griffith, ed., *Great Painters and Their Famous Bible Pictures: The Bible Story Retold in One Hundred Masterpieces Chronologically Arranged, With Sidelights of the Life and Work of the Artists* (Wm. H. Wise, 1925): 94,

¹⁴ Dan Malan, danmalan@aol.com & www.antiquemapsandprints.com/gustave-dore.htm.



1.
Love's Gauntlet—the USS *Pueblo* History

- A. Love Taken Hostage—USS *Pueblo* a Noble Crew
B. Love Is Tops—Because Only Love Will Find a Way

While listening to the radio one day ... I heard ...

Maybe I hang around here, a little more than I should.
We both know I got somewhere else to go,
But I got something to tell you,
That I never thought I would,
But I believe you really ought to know ...

I love you, I honestly love you.

If we both were born in another place and time,
This moment might be ending in a kiss.
But there you are with yours, and here I am with mine,
So I guess we'll just be leaving it at this ...

I love you, I honestly love you.

I Honestly Love You – by Olivia Newton John

“I Love you, Rose,” said Commander Bucher.

See Book Here

www.PreciousHeart.net/love



1968 - Capt. Bucher & his ship the [USS Pueblo](#) kidnapped by N. Korea. Held a year. Bucher was forced to LIE to save his men. *What would you do?* Contrasting 4 ethical systems and the "absolutes," esp. Truth and Love, *where* is the absolutely RIGHT choice?

Christian ETHICS is the quest for God's will this side of heaven, and *TIME* itself plays a part in the determination of rightness.

www.PreciousHeart.net/love

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See [Long Course on Deontology and Teleology](#)

See [Two Hermeneutical Presuppositions](#)

See [Depravity and Will of God](#)

See [Truth Article](#) that briefly reviews three articles on Truth in the 2005 Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society (JETS) by Andreas J. Köstenberger, R. Albert Mohler, and J. P. Moreland

See [Speaking the Truth in Love and Fundamentalist Mocking of Love](#), a commentary on Ephesians 4:15

See [Character Quotes by Famous Persons](#)

See [800+ Bibliography on Love](#)

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Other Ethics Articles of Interest

[Will of God and a Man's Lifework: Condensation](#), by Henry B. Wright, a masterly work on the principles of discovering God's will for one's life.

["What is Truth?" - Short Review of Three 2005 JETS Articles](#) on Truth by Andreas J. Köstenberger, R. Albert Mohler, and J. P. Moreland.

[War and Peace Article](#) by M.G. Maness viewing SBC Doctrine of Peace and War.

LIFE Magazine Articles

[LIFE, Feb 7, 1969, Bucher and the Pueblo--The Cruel Dilemmas of Duty](#) - read the article here on GoogleBooks.

[LIFE, Aug 21, 1970, The Pueblo Variousy Remembered, by William A. McWhirter](#) - a small review of three books

Two Companion Books by Michael G. Maness

Two companion books, researched prior to the completion of *Would You Lie to Save a Life* were challenges in themselves and fortify it more fully:

[*Heart of the Living God*](#) and [*Character Counts*](#)

See Book Here

www.PreciousHeart.net/love

