

A painting depicting a glowing cross rising from a manger scene. The cross is composed of bright, radiating lines of light, extending upwards into a dark, textured sky. Below the cross, a simple wooden manger structure is visible, with silhouettes of figures inside. The background is a dark, textured sky with hints of blue and purple, suggesting a night scene. The overall mood is one of divine light and hope.

Christmas – The Bridge of Love  
Ruth 1:16-18



Ruth 1:16 And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God:

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

Our theme this year is *Building Bridges*. During the Christmas season we will look at several “bridges” that are all related to the Book of Ruth.





The Book of Ruth is one of the most fascinating and important short stories that anyone has ever written. As a piece of literature it is almost perfect.

- The German poet Goethe called it "the loveliest complete work on a small scale" ever written.
- Alexander Schroder, a literary critic, wrote: "No poet in the world has written a more beautiful short story."
- The eminent archaeologist W. F. Albright wrote: "The delicacy of the story of Ruth remains unsurpassed anywhere; Ruth's loyalty to her mother-in-law, the scene between her and Boaz in chapter 3, and the final episode with Naomi (4:14-17) are gems of world-literature."
- Yet, as a revelation from God, it is equally impressive.

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/OT/Ruth/Ruth.htm>





This morning we will see how Ruth is a Bridge of Love.

## I. LOVE PRODUCES A BRIDGE OF COMMITMENT

Ruth 1:16b “...for whither thou goest, I will go...”

A. Love abides faithful during the hard times.

Ruth 1:3 And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.

4 And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

5 And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.





- Naomi's family left Bethlehem during a famine.

Ruth 1:1 Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

- The times were tough politically, economically, and socially.
- Naomi's husband dies.
- Naomi's sons die.
- Naomi faced hard times from the past, and now in the present.





B. Love abides faithful during the helpless times.

Ruth 1:6 Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread.

7 Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

9 The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each *of you* in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

10 And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.





11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? *are there yet any more* sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

12 Turn again, my daughters, go *your way*; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, *if* I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

13 Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for **it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.**

- Naomi could see no advantage to stay in Moab – she was hopeless.

Ruth 1:12 Turn again, my daughters, go *your way*; for I am too old to have an husband. **If I should say, I have hope**, *if* I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

13 **Would ye tarry** for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for **it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.**





Acts 27:20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on *us*, **all hope...was then taken away.**

Jer. 18:12 And they said, **There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.**

- Though Naomi saw hopelessness, Ruth saw commitment.

Ruth 1:14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but **Ruth clave unto her.**

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.





1:16 “And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for **whither thou goest, I will go...**”

Josh. 1:7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it *to* the right hand or *to* the left, **that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. ...**

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: **for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest.**

- Love was a bridge over the chasm of generational and national differences.





## II. LOVE PRODUCES A BRIDGE OF CONTENTMENT

Ruth 1:16c “...and where thou lodgest, I will lodge...”

A. Love accepts the unknown – “...where...”

Mt. 8:18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, **Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.**

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.





Heb. 11:8 **By faith** Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, **obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.**

Gal. 5:6 “...but **faith** which **worketh by love.**”

B. Love accommodates the uncomfortable

## Accommodate

7. To make suitable or consistent; adapt:  
*to accommodate oneself to circumstances.*

8. o bring into harmony or make adjustments or allowances for: *to accommodate differences;*

<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/accommodate?s=t>



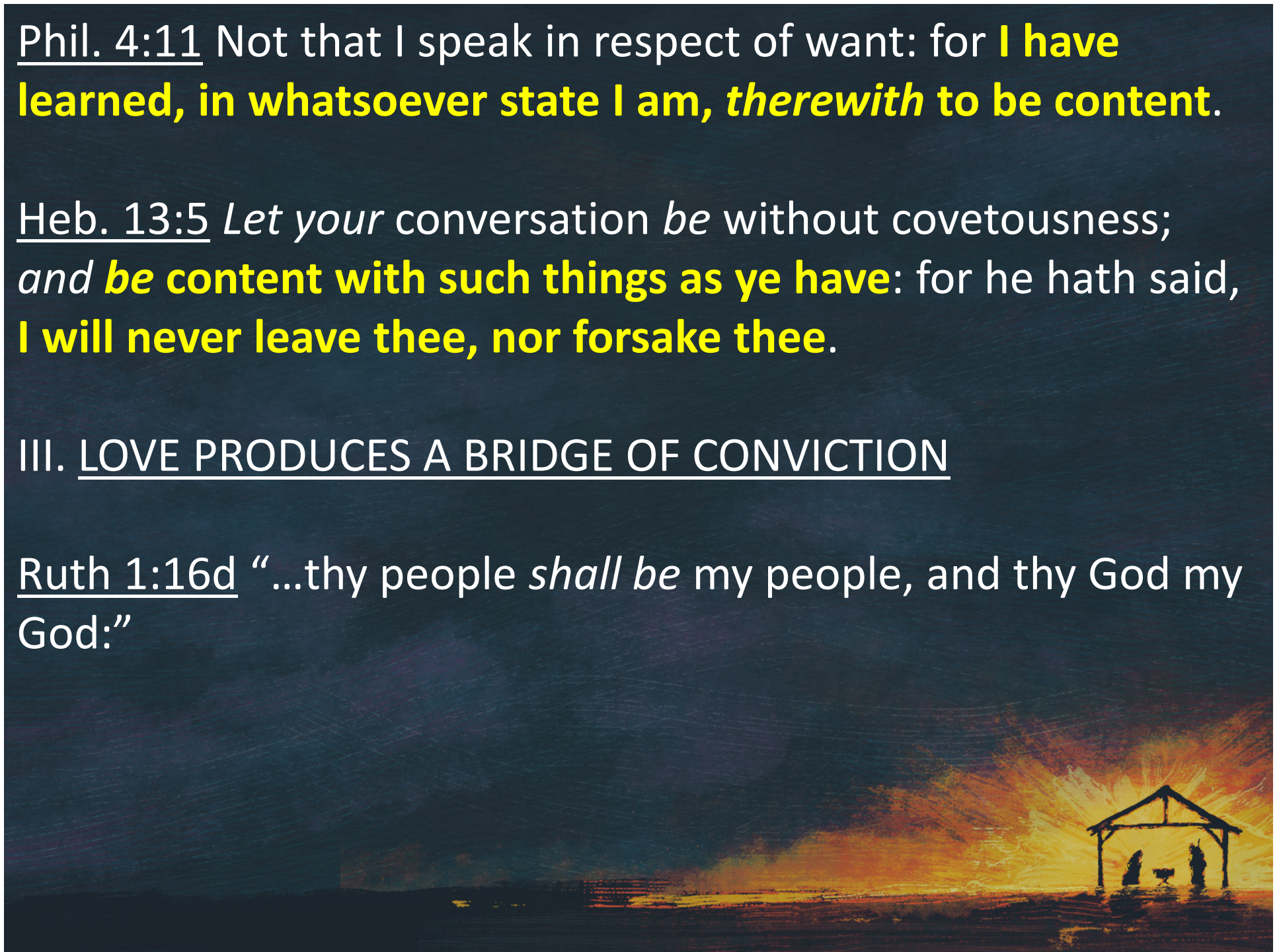


Phil. 4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for **I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.**

Heb. 13:5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and **be content with such things as ye have**: for he hath said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.***

### III. LOVE PRODUCES A BRIDGE OF CONVICTION

Ruth 1:16d “...thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God:”





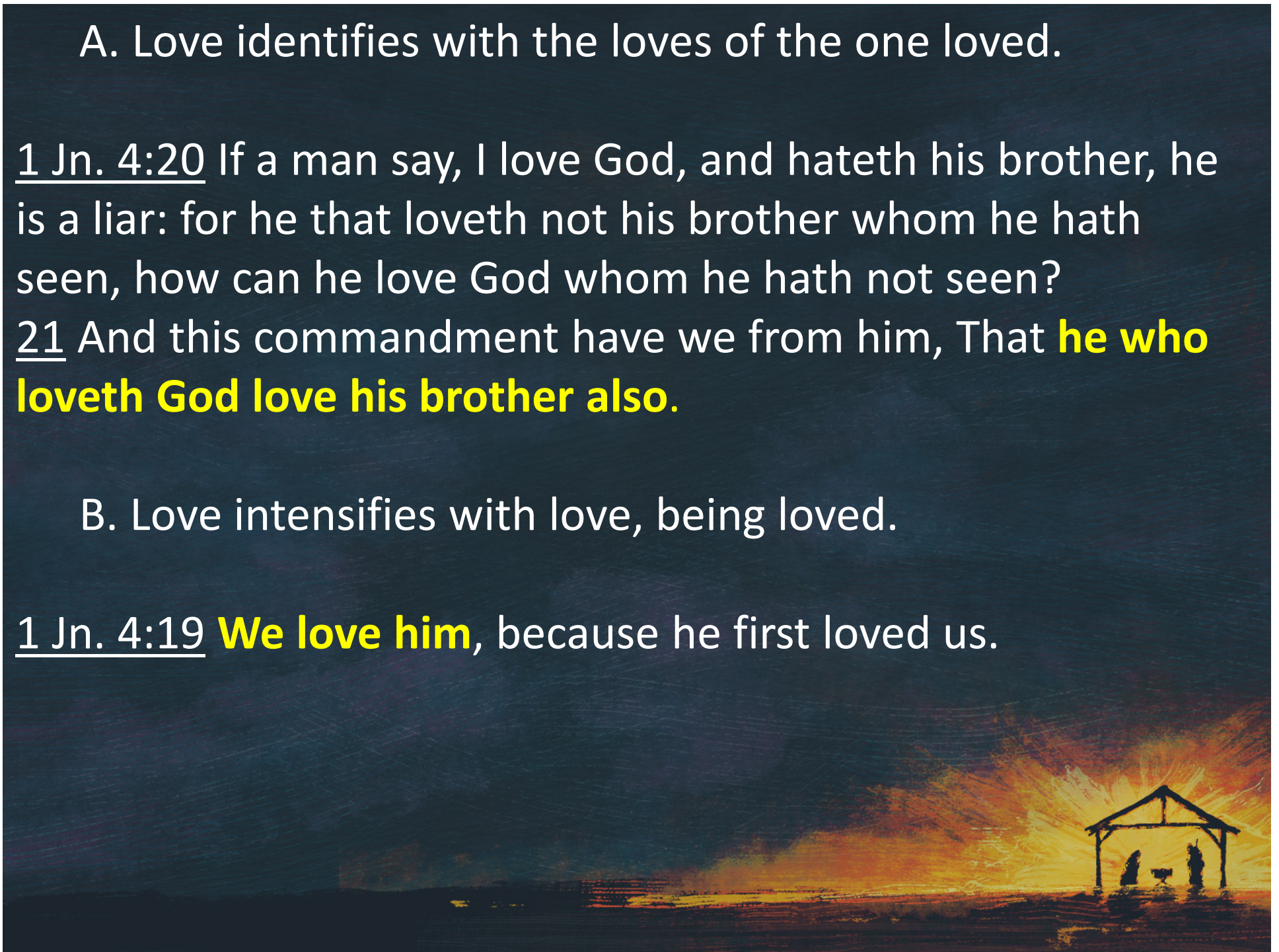
A. Love identifies with the loves of the one loved.

1 Jn. 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21 And this commandment have we from him, That **he who loveth God love his brother also.**

B. Love intensifies with love, being loved.

1 Jn. 4:19 **We love him**, because he first loved us.





## IV. LOVE PRODUCES A BRIDGE OF COMPLETION

Ruth 1:17a “**Where** thou diest, will I die, and **there** will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* but death part thee and me.’

A. Love knows no desertion.

1 Jn. 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for **if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us**: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Mt. 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, **I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.** Amen.





B. Love knows no divorcement.

Rom. 8:35 **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** *shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

C. Love knows no defeat.

Rom. 8:37 Nay, in all these things **we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.**

D. Love knows no distraction.

Rom. 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

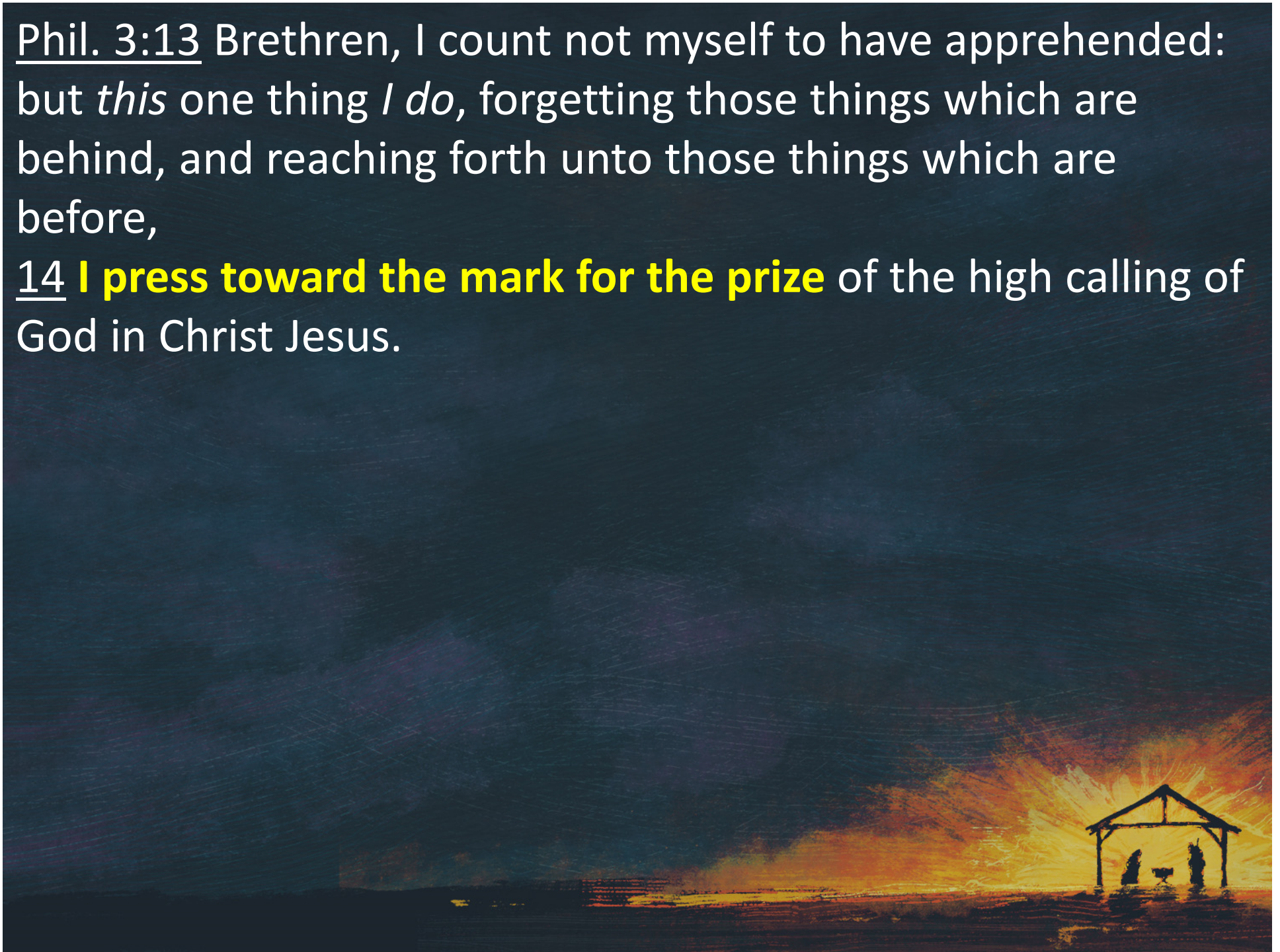
39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**





Phil. 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended:  
but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are  
behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are  
before,

14 **I press toward the mark for the prize** of the high calling of  
God in Christ Jesus.





## Conclusion

The Commitment of Love = leaving heaven for us.

2 Cor. 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet **for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.**

The Contentment of Love = being accepted in the beloved.

Eph. 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein **he hath made us accepted in the beloved.**





The Conviction of Love = not being ashamed to be called our God.

Heb. 11:16 But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore **God is not ashamed to be called their God:** for he hath prepared for them a city.

The Completion of Love = love in action, maturing unto perfection.

1 Jn. 2:5 But **whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected:** hereby know we that we are in him.

1 Jn. 4:17 **Herein is our love made perfect,** that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: **because as he is, so are we in this world.**

18 There is no fear in love; but **perfect love casteth out fear:** because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.





## Christmas – The Bridge of Love

Ruth was a bridge of love to her mother-in-law, committed with contentment and with a conviction for completion, to maintain such love for Naomi.

The Lord Jesus Christ left heaven for a stable, committed to a cross for our contentment in Him. Let us cultivate an attitude of commitment to stay faithful to Him until death.

