

Bookends

*“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things”. 1
Corinthians 13:7*

Growing up in our home, we didn't have many fancy things, but we did have fancy marble bookends from Italy that my parents received as a wedding gift. Many would consider these bookends objects to collect dust, but I admired these bookends. Even though I loved to read, I looked past all the great volumes of literature and ran my fingers over the smooth and shiny white and gray marble bookends. Once, I picked one of them up, and it was way too heavy for my little hands and I dropped it squarely on my foot! Yikes!

I have now inherited these marble bookends. The bookends are still white and gray and shiny and smooth and heavy... beautifully and artfully carved marble bookends. Very fancy! I use them in my home to hold up some of my favorite classics.

Bookends are used to “hold up” some great literature! Bookends are placed at the front and back of great words by revered authors! I'd like to suggest for further study that you look at the “bookends” in our selected Scripture from 1 Corinthians 13:7: “Love bears all things...” and “Love endures all things.” These are the “bookend” phrases that begin and end this brief verse.

Look more closely at what St. Paul is stating. Love BEARS all things. To bear, in this context, means to tolerate, to accept, to shoulder, to carry, to suffer, or to endure. Jesus, our Savior, out of his great love, bore our sins upon himself: “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows...” (Isaiah 53:4); and “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24). Christ loved us so much that he suffered and carried our sins in our place. That is the first “bookend” phrase.

The second “bookend” is that love ENDURES all things. To endure also means to tolerate, to withstand, to experience, to suffer, to bear. Christ, our selfless Savior, endured death—even death on a cross—for us. “...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at

the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

In the middle of these two “bookend” phrases about love is sandwiched the words, “believes all things, hopes all things.” It is only because Jesus loves us so deeply and dearly to bear our sins and endure the cross, that we can believe and hope in that love of God in Christ Jesus! Only because we have a Savior whose love is unconditional, can we even begin to live out the love St. Paul talks about in the “bookend” phrases.

As we love God and love others, let us demonstrate the bookends: “Love bears all things...love endures all things.”

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