the blessing and prosperity of others and is vigilantly committed to see it come to pass. Love doesn’t give up on others in spite of their immaturity, ignorance, or stubbornness. It perseveres in hope that all will turn out well and be restored to peace and blessing.

2 Timothy 2:24 - And the Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, NASB

Colossians 3:12-15 - And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. NASB

See the power and virtue that love is in this crescendo of qualities; love protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres, it is the crowning and prominent virtue because it has an unconquerable attitude of benevolence toward others that endures and perseveres even through the most difficult of times, and even injuries from its own objects. As a result of this Paul writes; Love never fails!

8 Love never fails — So as to express the great power of love to always achieve its goal Paul writes, “love never fails.” It does not fail in its power, but always achieves its goal of blessing and benefit to its objects. Love may not always appear successful, but it will always glorify God and therefore succeed. As in the cross, Christ appeared to be defeated, yet his loving sacrifice triumphed over all evil. Even if one dies when loving another, what appears to be the defeat of death is actually a triumph of love! See here the beauty and the power of the unfailing nature of love! But these words do not stand alone, but are connected to the whole verse and into the next section of text all the way to verse 13. Here the unfailing nature of love is contrasted with other virtues and gifts of the Spirit which will actually cease and be done away! But beyond these, love will endure!

1 Corinthians 13:8 - love never fails, but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. NASB

Paul contrasts love with the gifts of tongues, prophecy and knowledge. His point is the enduring nature of love even beyond the current age and into the next, when gifts will no longer be necessary, but love will abide and endure beyond the eschaton (the last days, from the cross to the second coming) and into the age to come. See here when connected to the context of the whole of chapter 13, above all other virtues, LOVE is chief, because it is enduring and unfailing. Love will abide even when faith and hope no longer have a purpose. Because when faith is realized at the Resurrection when Christ comes again, hope will have achieved its great longing, but love will endure beyond this age and into the age to come. This is why Paul raises love above even the great virtues of faith and hope!

1 Corinthians 13:13 - 13 But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. NASB

Gifts are temporary and they will cease, and so will faith and hope, but love will always endure.

Here then we see that love is indeed the crowning virtue, and the main thing to be pursued and protected, sought after and carried out. Love is the sum total of all the Law and the Prophets of the Old Testament, and the new commandment in the New Testament. Indeed love is the measure of all our religion, and the sure proof that God is in us and among us!

1 John 4:7-8 - Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. NASB
It is the most important and fundamental thing of all that we are and all that we do. Let us therefore seek to understand how God describes this love in His Word, and thereby see how we shall incorporate it into our lives that we might become the very imitators of God, and walk in love as He has called us.

Ephesians 5:1-2 - Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

NASB

Let us never forget that love is seen most clearly in the Cross of Christ and should be a constant reminder to us of the selfless nature of love. The Gospel is the demonstration and definition of love.

John 15:13 - 13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. NASB

John 3:16 - 16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. NASB

Romans 5:8 - 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. NASB

1 John 4:9-10 - 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Further, the Holy Spirit reasons with us that if God has demonstrated His love to us in the Gospel, then we “ought to love one another” as a result. This is how we know that God is in us, among us, and how love is further perfected, matured and growing in our lives.

1 John 4:11-13 - 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

See here in verse 13, love originates in God and is a fruit of the Spirit. True godly love is a product of the Spirit’s power being lived out in our lives and proof positive that God is in us.

Galatians 5:22-23 - 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. NASB

All of this love that is being produced in our Christian life is very closely tied to the sheer power of God’s overwhelming love for us in Christ. In fact, our union in Christ is mysteriously spoken of as intertwined with God’s great love for us that we have come to know through faith in Christ.

1 John 4:16-13 - 16 And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. NASB

Love for God is seen in obedience to His commandments

When we speak of the second table of the Law, and loving our neighbor as ourselves, loving one another in all these ways we have discussed is clearly seen. But what about the first table of the Law, and loving God with all of our heart, and soul and mind and strength? John speaks of the nature of love to God as obedience to the commandments of God. Since love is part of the very nature of God Himself, therefore obedience to every commandment of God is an act of love and consistent with love in every way.

2 John 4-6 - 4 I was very glad to find some of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment to do from the Father. 5 And now I ask you, lady, not as writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. 6 And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it. NASB