

Happy Birthday With Love

1 Corinthians 13:13 - There are three things that remain - faith, hope and love - and the greatest of these is love.

Matthew 22:36-40 - "Sir, which is the most important command in the laws of Moses?" Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second most important is similar: Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself."

I am remembering today the birthday parties of my childhood. The crepe paper strung from corner to corner, the balloons, and the ice cream and cake. Money was very scarce then for our family and yet I remember with such fondness those special gifts that mom somehow came up with that filled my heart with happiness and joy. What awesome warmth I have felt this day as I have remembered just how much love had to do with making everything just PERFECT!

And now, all these years later, I realize what love has to do with it still; the love of family and of friends. Their special touches that have made me feel loved, special and cared for this day: the cards, the phone calls, the hugs, the cake and ice cream, and the surprises that have filled my heart with happiness and joy. There are three things that remain: faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love.

In 2010 I wrote "Being a Special Friend" and I share it with all of you on this my special day.

I love you not for what you are,

But for what I am when I am with you.

I love you not for what you have made of yourself,

But for what you are making of me.

I love you because you have done more than any words in a creed could have done to make me good, and more than any "earthly treasures" could have done to make me happy.

You have done it sometimes with a touch, sometimes with words, sometimes with a gift, sometimes with quiet space....always an empowering and thoughtful presence.

You have done it by being yourself and reflecting God's joy, love, grace and forgiveness into my life.

Perhaps that is what being a Special Friend means. It is indeed a most blessed gift!

Blest to be a blessing....what an awesome MIRACLE! You, my special friend, are God's MIRACLE.

Join me this week as we remember our special friends and thank God for each and every one of them. Perhaps even a note in the mail to remind them of how they have blessed our lives.

Prayer: Gracious and loving God, how I praise you for birthdays....our special days that remind us of your love for us and of those you have put into our lives that have been our "special friends and loved ones." Give me a grateful heart that burns with a desire to pass on your love and my love to those I come in contact with so that they can feel "special" too. And remind me, Lord, to celebrate growing older. It is a privilege not given to everyone! For crepe paper, balloons, cake and ice cream put together with love and joy, I give you thanks this day. For your awesome love, your grace and your forgiveness, I give you thanks. In your precious name I pray. Amen