

Title: Love Endures all things

Text: I Cor 13:4-7

Take your Bibles and let's turn to I Corinthians chapter 13. We want to ^{Conclude} continue our study of GOD'S WAY OF LOVE. Now, this is the third message in this study from I Cor. 13. But, I want to start our reading, once again, at Verse 1, as we remaaind ourselves of this great chapter on God's wonderful way of love.

(Read I Cor. 13:1-7)

PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, you know our need of love better than we do. And Father, I know there are folks here who need to experience your love. And I know there are a lot of Christians who know you as saviour, but for some reason they are not experiencing your love. And so, Father, teach us to love as you want us to love. Help us to make those commitments that are built on loving----loving you first and others second. And we thank you for this time together. In the name of Jesus, we pray.... AMEN

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Please remember,

Chapter 12 verse 31 is the key verse to Chapter 13. Paul says, "I will show you a more excelent way." And that more excellent way is the way of love. Love isn't just a thing you do, or, an act. God's love is a way of life. It is a life style. It is loving as a habit of ^{LIFE} ~~love~~.

(1A) Now, in vereses 1-3, we noticed that the way of love is necessary for all christian ministry. Whether you speak, or have all knowledge, or faith, or giving, or, whatever your gift, or talent, or ability...without love the results are pretty bad. The Bible says it very ^{well} ~~well~~: without love you are nothing. You become just a lot of noise.

Dear friends, there is no question about it. We all need God's love in our life.

(2A) Then, last Sunday, beginning at Vs 4, we started looking at the Nature of love. ^{God's}

(B) And we learned what God's love is. THE WAY OR NATURE OF GOD'S LOVE IS PATIENT AND KIND.

In our relationships and our responds to others, when God's love is operating in us, we will respond with patience and kindness ^{to and with others}

(2B) And this brings us to next section concerning the nature of love. And that is: WHAT LOVE IS NOT... Paul uses 8 words or phrases to tell us WHAT LOVE IS NOT. ~~How it is different~~

And we begin to look at how it is different from natural human reaction. In verese 4-7 we have the best discription of love in the world. And it is divided into three parts. There are are two positives. There are eight negatives. And then four statements about things.

The two positives tell you what love is like. It is patient and it is kind. That is why I spent time on it last week. And the word love only appears with those two words. In the Greek it says "THE LOVE IS PATIENT. THE LOVE IS KIND."

Now ~~the~~ the next thing he gets into is showing you how ^{Love} ~~it~~ is different. Not simply in its responds to people, which is patient and kind, but also in how God's Love refuses ~~it's refusing~~ to act with selfish attitudes. It is often said that we learn best what something is by finding ^{out} what it is not. And here Paul gives you eight statements to show you what love is not. How it is different in what it refuses to do in terms of selfish attitudes. So, let's take a look at them.

(1) First, it says that it is not jealous. ~~Not at all under any circumstance~~ Now, let me try and give you an example of this that might center in our minds as to the meaning of jealous.

Turn to Genesis chapter 37. Genesis 37. This is the story of Joseph and his brothers. And here we have an example of jealousy which is clealy ~~is~~ stated in the passage to be not loving. They are acturally hating their brother Joseph. And they are jealous of him.

Genese 37 verse 3 says..(read vs 3-5,8,11)

Jealousy. What is it? In this case they hated their brother Joseph because their father loved him more....

Do you often feel that you don't get what you deserve? Hay! be thankful. If we all got what we deserved, do you know what we would get? (HA) The Bible says that ^{it's} ~~it's~~ because of the Lord's mercy that we are all not consumed. Because his compassion fails not. That simply means that he loves us so much that **He** with holds his judgement.

But you know a lot of us. we see other people being blessed and appreciated and pushed up in front of us. And so jealousy comes into our heart.

Parents can see that in their childrens life. For some reason because of some need or circumstance, you might give more love to one child over the others. And the other children looking on get jealous. They don't see the reasons they just see the attention and they get jealous.

And then of couse when we grew up we play games like children do. We are jealous of the praise and love and affection that so get and we don't. And their develops a root of bitterness because we resent the praise that comes to others. Jealouscy. GOD'S LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS. Not at all.

(2C) Number two, back in I Corthinians 13, says that love does not brag.

Now, I wish that I had a lot of passages to go to show you the meaning of this word. But, this is the only place in the Bible that the Greek word "brag" appears. How do I know the meaning of a word that was written in a lanuage two thousand years ago, if I don't have any other scripture to compare?

Well, one way is to go back to those days and look at the word from the culture, So I did that and I find a good example. There was a church pastor, a leader, of a church in Alexander, Egypt. His name was Clement. And he wrote a commentary on this. And I just want to read to you what he said concerning this word "brag."

Brags
"~~is~~ is ornamenting oneself with emphases on the useless."

Now, I kind off like that. Love does not brag. It is ornamenting oneself with emphases on the useless. That which is not important.

In other words, God's love never brags about that which is useless. The scripture says, "Lay up treasuers in heaven not on the earth." What do we do? We brag about what we have in the earth, which is really useless when compared to eternity. It is not really important. So, we are all bragging about the things that we have. It is amazing.

I saw a couple of young adults ~~people~~ the other day bragging over cars.

One guy was bragging over his brand new trans Am. The other guy was telling him about his friends new Prochs. You know, they are going on an on. Just seating their bragging about what they had.

And you see people do the same thing with clothes. Hay! How do you like my new outfit. Cool isn't it?

What is all this balony? That is not God's love. God's love isn't built on things. But we keep doing that, you see. We brag about things. Things that are useless.

Look, dear friends, the real ~~game is played~~ ^{issue is} with people. LOVING PEOPLE. Not things. Not bragging over your things. That doesn't make you more important because we own something that someone else doesn't. Now, I know that we all think that. We say, "Boy, so and so must be important. Just look at the big car he drives." Are you kidding. That isn't what is important. People are people no matter what they have. God's love knows the difference. When we love the way God wants us to, we are not impressed with things and the bragging and the boasting that folks do to impress others. That is not God's love. God's love removes all that and looks at people as God see them. *Love Does not brag*

(36) Well, the Bible also says that love is not arrogant. Do you know what arrogance is? Is it pride?...YES....But it is more than that. ~~I want to give you a couple of examples of arrogance.~~

~~Basic~~ Basical the word means ^{to blow}. You know, when you inflate your tire. You made it arrogant. You blow it up. It simple means that some people inflate or blow up their own importance, their own abilities. We are ^{Talking} ~~calling~~ about boasting and trying to impress people.

~~Well~~, Proverbs 27:2 says "let another man praise you and not your own mouth." Don't go around inflating your own importance or abilities. That is not God's love. God's love is not arrogant.

(a) Now, I want you to see a couple of example of this. Turn to I Corinthian 4. Chapter 4 and look at verses 6 and 7. And example of arrogance.

By the way this word is in the middle voice in Greek. And it means "to puff yourself up." No one else puffs you up. Thing about it. It really is sort of funny. I got to thinking about that. How many people try to puff you up. Did you know that no compliment in world can ever puff you up? Did you know that? I finally got that in my head and I just couldn't get it out. It drove me crazy.

You know how we are. We are always worrying about what we say as to whether or not we can puff them up in what we say. And I finally saw what the Bible is teaching. No body puffs you up. There is only one person who puffs you up. And that is your own sinful heart. No matter what is said to you. Listen, if you are controlled by the Holy Spirit, you follow God's word, Hay! there is only one person that can puff you up, there is only one person who can inflate you beyond what God's Word teaches. And that is yourself. And that amazed because it is all found in the middle voice. You do it in and of yourself. So, you cannot blame anybody.

Have you ever said to somebody, "Don't say that. I don't want to get the big head." Hay! the answer to that is if you are going to get the big head, you are already going to get it no matter what I say.

The problem is in our own hearts. We always want to blame something or someone on the outside. It is in our own hearts. Who is going to puff you up? Who is going to make you arrogant? YOU ARE GOING TO DO IT TO YOURSELF.

Now, here is an example. Vs 6.....(read vs 6-7)

Now, I learn that arrogance is a superior attitude. Do you feel superior to other folks? YOU SAY, "OF COURSE, BECAUSE I AM."

Now, wait a minute. This is a problem. Let me give you an illustration. Here is this guy that plays the piano(not Debon), but he is good. He has got a lot of talent. And there was another guy just learning to play the piano. And he comes up to the guy that can really play the piano and says, "boy, you play wonderful." And

And he says, "Oh, no, I don't play very well.".....(false humility)

He said, "no, i Mean it, You really play great. I am just starting out."
He said, "Well, it is true. I do play better than you do. But after all."

He said, I would like you to teach me." "Well, I really don't have the time." "You don't have the time to teach me." "No! You see, the truth is that I am so far beyond where you are, there is no way that I could teach you."

But you know, while he was talking, the Lord convicted him. And he began to teach his friend how to play the piano. And do you know what he learned? He learned .. He learned that it wasn't a matter of time. It was a matter of love. It really was. Just loving. There are all kinds of examples like this. Superour attitude.

Now, whether you have the time or not is another matter. So, don't be labor the illustraton.

But the point is that that guy knew in that moment he did not have love. He could play the pino quite well, but he just didn't want to take the time. Love...superior attitude. Well, you are down here, and I am up on a higher level. Do you understand? When ever you have people down here, and you think that you are higher, then you are wrong.

Superior attitude. There isn't anything that anyone of us has ..in talent, in ability, achievement, accomplishments, business, money, you name it....there isn't a thing that you and I have that we didn't get from God. If you don't believe that, then one day God is going to show you it is true. He may strip away all of that which you have your confidence in and prove to you that we don't have anything except what God gives us the ability to have. It comes from him. Grace provides it. Arrogance is when you think you are superior.

Here is another illustration. Look at chapter 5 verse 2. This is kind off interesting. In Vs 1 it says "it is actually reported that there is immorality among you.¶

immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife."

Here is a case of incest in this church.

Now, look at vs 2. "And you have become arrogant." "and have not mourned instead, in order that the one who had done this deed might be removed from your midst."

Now, I learn something else about arrogance. Arrogance is believing that you don't have to deal with sin the way God says so. You begin to tolerate sin. You don't want to deal with it. That is arrogance. Arrogance in thinking that you don't have to deal with sin the way God says. You can tolerate it. You can pass by on the other side. After all, I don't want to get involved. God says that you are not loving. You are arrogant. God's love will deal with things the way God says.

O.K. back to chapter 13....Love is not arrogant. (4 C) Here is a fourth characteristic; love does not act unbecomingly.

Now, what does this mean? From this Greek word we get our English word "~~planning~~" "shape". So, literally it reads "Love is without shape." It is also used with the idea of tact: saying things in the right way. I think a lot of us mean well, but we are not really concerned about how it will affect others.

Let me give you an example of having no tact. You have these great feelings of love for a friend. And so you come up to your friend and say, "I love you. And because I love you I want to tell you that you have bad breath. And you dress like a pig."

Now, examine that! The content was good. I love you. I care about you. Right? But the trouble is that the tact was poor. It was said in the wrong way. And then some folks come back and say: "Well, it is true. ~~The~~ person has bad breath and dresses like a pig. And someone ought to tell the truth. And because I love that person I will."

But the Bible says that love has shape to it. It has tact. You are not loving when you are rude. That is what this verse is saying.

When you are rude even though you are saying what you believe to be true, you are not loving. And it is God's love that changes people.

So, many of us miss that point. You say, "Listen, I meant what I said. And what I said goes. It is the truth."

But, wait a minute. Do you love? Do you really care? God's love has tact. It says things at the proper time with the proper concern.

Now, let me give you a very interesting illustration. It is found in Romans chapter 1: 27. This verse is talking about how corrupt a person gets when they turn their back on the Lord. And God finally gives them over to their own passions and desires.

Romans 1:27 says , "In the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error."

Now, that is talk, obviously, about homosexuality. But what fascinated me was the little statement "men with men committing indecent acts" is our same word translated in I Cor. 13 "does not act unbecomingly."

Now, let me show you what that means. Homosexuals probably would say that they love one another. But, God is saying that that is not love. They are acting unbecomingly. They are rude. And they are hurting. They are not helping. The words may sound right in a proper context. But, they are in a wrong context. They are in a context that God says is wrong. So, they are not really loving. They are committing indecent acts. Literally they are acting unbecomingly. Love without shape, without concern and care for how their acts are really seen from God's perspective. They are hurting people's lives, damaging them psychologically, emotionally and every other way. And that in no way shape or form can be called LOVE.

Back to I Corinthians 13. (5) fiveth, love does not seek its own. Have you ever seen someone who does that? They always want to be right. They always seek their own things. They could care less how it affects you. You probably don't have that problem, but other folks do.

I Corinthians 13 verse 5 says "Love does not seek its own." Literally, it is not seeking the things of itself."

Here you have a person who is so self-centered and so selfish they don't see anybody elses ^{But} thing. They are not even interested in it.

These people are usually hostile and angry. Upset with anyone that does not see what they are talking about is more important than anything that could possible concern them. Selfishness is the root problem.

Philippians 2:4 says "do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interest of others. God, over and over again tells us to be concerned about other people. Don't simply seek your own things. Jesus came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. The Bible says that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. Love Does not seek its own.

~~Are you self centered?~~

(6 ✓) It also says that Love is not provoked. Are you ever provoked? So, when ever you are provoked at someone, you are not loving them.

You say, "Now, wait a minute. You have got to get provoked over things that are wrong." THAT IS TRUE.

Let me give you an example of that in the Bible. On Mars Hill in the city of Athens (Acts 17:16,) the Bible says Paul while he was waiting for Silas and Timothy in Athens, his "spirit was being provoked within him as he was beholding the city full of idols." It is important to be provoked at sin, at idolitry, at situations that are wrong. But, the Bible never tells you to be provoked at people. And there is a big difference. Are you provoked over what is wrong. And then did you let it slip over and you start getting ticked off at someone who is involed in it?

But Not Provoked at people! That never is God's love. Let me give you an example of someone who was unloving: Paul and Barnabas. Acts 15"39 says "they were in a sharp disagreement because Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. Barnabas broke up the missionary team and this caused a sharp disagreement. That is our same word "provoked." Paul and Barnabas were provoked.

Now, who was right? Well, I think the Bible clearly indicates that Barnabas was right. And Paul was wrong. WHY? Because laterly on when Paul was in jail, he said "Bring Mark for he is profitable to me for the ministry." Paul had to eat his own words. "~~Barnabas~~ ^{Mark wants to leave} ~~me~~ ^{wants to}. He copied out on our ministry together. He broke up the team."

Barnabas the son of encouragement saw hope in that kid. He said, "I will take him." And that became so sharp that they separated from one another.

Now, God is all knowing. So, he allowed two missionary teams to develop. But, Paul was wrong. Barnabas in his part in the argument was wrong. They were both provoked at one another.

Now, let me ask you a question. What do you do when you sincerely disagree with someother believer? You say, "Well, we always try to have agreement." REALLY? What if you do not?

You say, "Well, who ever shouts the loudest gets his way"...NO..NO How do you solve it? Here are two christians, they love the Lord, but they both see things differently. They disagree.

Let's take this pulpit. Some of you like it were it is.. on the side of the stage. Others think the pulpit should be in the center of the stage. And you have 36 doctrinal, Biblical, theological reasons why the pulpit should remain where it's at. And I have 37 reasons why it should be in the center of the stage. You say, "Well you have 37 so you win." No...because those with the 36 reasons say that my 37 are all wrong.

Have you ever run into this? Maybe not. But, what do you do? Here are two people who disagree. And they both have their reasons. What do you do?

Look, folks, there are situations where we do disagree. The point is.. that many of us start getting provoked at each other. And it is a ~~characteristi~~ characteristic of mature love that can look at another Christian who disagrees and say, "you know, we obviously disagree over this issue, but let's not let it effect our love for one another." We will have to agree to disagree. Because we want to love. Loving people...not being provoked at them..regardless of the disagreements that exists.

That is where Paul and Barnabus made their mistake. And all through church history we continue to make the same mistake. Because God's love is not their for people. Not provoked at all.

(70) And the next one is closely related: "does not take into account a wrong suffered." If you were speaking Greek today you would use that phrase relating to "an accountant." Do you know what God is saying? There is a book keeping ledgar in our minds. And a lot of us when someone says something against us ^{that} we don't like, we put it on the debit column. And there is going to have to be a credit over there some where. And later, even years later, we do something we ought not to do, or we say something we ought not to say simply because we have been calculating. We put on our book keeping ledguar that wrong towards us. And we were never able to get rid of it. We never buried it.

Has some body said something against you. Have they ^{done} ~~done~~ something against you? And are you taking that into account? Be very careful. The Bible says , don't ever do that.

Do you know what you ought to put on your book keeping ledgar? Philippians 4:8 ~~uses this words~~ says, "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is good, let your mind dwell on these things." *Love doe not keep account of a wrong*

And that is the same word "Calculate". Put to the account. Be a book keeper and just score the things that are lovely, and good, and honorable, and so forth. Don't put the wrongs there. ^{Things that} ~~That~~ have been done towards you.

(90) And also the Bible says that God's love does not "rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth."

What do you do when you hear that some brother or sister with whom you have had a disagreement all of a sudden blows it? Do you throw a party? What do you do? What do you do when a brother or sister falls into sin? Do you say, "well, they got what they deserve." Or, do you love them?

"Do not rejoice in unrighteousness," *But rejoice with the truth*

What do you do when you hear of the presence of sin in a believers life? Does it hurt you? Are you sorrowful? Do you want to pray and help them? or, OUR YOU GLAD IT HAPPENED?

God's love never rejoices with unrighteousness. It rejoices with the truth. Because it knows that the truth will set folks free.

Well, these are all negativatives. But there is one final thing that I want you to see. Vs 7...Love is not only defferent in its responds to people being patient and kind. Not only different in its refusal to act with ^{Negative} simple attitudes. But love , also, is differeent in the way it relatesto

circumstances. And situations.

How do you ^{React} relate when circumstances are not going the way you thought they ought to go? How do you react when situations in your life are not what you really want? { If I were to ask for a testimony from all of you who are over 65. And I ask, "How many of you have gone through all of your life and ever thing that has happened to you, has been exactly the way you thought? All you dreams...all your hopes...^{you would say} "Are you kidding." Life is full of changes. All the things that you dream or hope for or plan for don't always happen. Right? It is like the guy who works all of his life and tryies to save his money for the day he retires. And finally that day comes. He retires. The next day he sufferes a heart attack. And all his dreams are gone.

^{How} ~~But~~, listen, how does love react to the things of life? The situations that are going bad. How does love deal with ^{LIFE SITUATION} that? Well, in four different ways Vs 7 says, "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." **Now, what does that mean?**

(1 C) Well, first of all I believe ^{God's love} reacts with protections. Bears all things. The word "bear" doesn't mean to endure. That is the last word. The word "bear" in Greek is "the roof of a house." It literally means "to cover." "To shelter."

The book of Proverbs tells us that if we love someone you cover their transgression and faults and sins.

Peter says in I Peter 4:8 that "love covers a multitude of sins."

DOES YOUR LOVE PROTECT?

What happens when the situations and circumstances in your life are really bad. What do you do? When someone is reacting to you in a way that you don't want. And maybe it is wrong. Well, what do you do? LOVE PROTECTS. LOVE SHELTERS. *IT Bears all things*

(29) The Bible also says that "love believes all things." And that is the matter of reacting with peace. "Believing all things" is ^{NOT} being gulable. It is not ~~say~~ ^{say} that you believe everything and anything. No, that is not the point.

BELIEVING ALL THINGS is a trust and confidence in a God who causes all things for our good and His glory. It is the peace that can say, "In every thing give thanks for this is the will of God." It is that peace of God which passes all understanding. That ~~know~~ ^{No} matter what happens you don't get worried You don't get anxious. Because you are trusting God to work it out in his time And you praise Him and thank Him for whatever the trail is.

DO YOU REALLY LOVE? People who love really do have peace. They really do rest in the lord. And they are thankful for everything. Giving thanks for all things. Why? Because you know Him. When you know the Lord and you know how He is working things out, man...you can praise the Lord for whatever happens....Lost job...sickness...~~do much master charge this month...WHATEVER IT IS...ERRORS...MISTAKES...~~ ^{deal} You can thank god. Praise the Lord. What a wonderful way to be happy. ^{Loves} ~~HE~~ BELIEVES ALL THINGS.

(30) Then, third, love hopes all things. It reacts with ^{Love} ~~promise~~. To put that in our language it means that you never give up on anything. You never give up on people. A lot of us when we notice someone going the wrong way, say "Oh, he will never change. He has been like that for 30 years. "

That is not love talking. I don't care how long you have lived. God can change anyone at any moment of time. But a lot of us give up. Listen, Love never gives up. It hopes all things.

Do you love? Do you really? Boy, it is easy to give up. You are facing a difficulty and you just want to give up. LOVE NEVER GIVES UP.

I think of the woman in my former church who prayed, daily, that her husband would be saved. She prayed for 33 years. And what a joy to see him come forward receiving Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour. 33 years she prayed for him. OH, dear friends, don't give up. Love hopes all things.

No-matter how difficult or what the trail maybe. GOD'S LOVE NEVER GIVES UP.

(4C) And it also says love endures all things. This word "endures" does mean "patience." But it is not the same thing as "patient" in Vs 4. In Vs 4 the word "patient" has the idea of long-suffering towards people. The word "endure" in Vs 7 has the idea of "bearing up under...being patient under a heavy load...a hard difficulty." You are able to bear the load because Love causes you to endure all things.

It is used of people with terminal illness. Love makes them endure when all human hope is gone. Isn't that fantastic?

It deals with those who have lost loved ones. Love endures inspite of the heartack, the loneliness and the lost loved one. Love endures all things.

Man! how we need God's love. So many people give up and quite. They don't have it. They can't take it. They don't like the pressure. They don't like the pressure they get at work, at home, with children, with husbands or wives, or, even with christians at church.....and on and on it goes.

And it is all coming out one way.....If we had a computer and we were reading people's lives it would all be coming out one way. **There is a lack of God's love in society.** That is what is wrong.

But you will never have God's love operating in your life until you receive Jesus Christ. I will tell you that. You can't even get to first base. It is amusing to watch folks try to love without Jesus. You can't do it. God loves you so much he sent His son Jesus to die on a cross for your sins. He paaid for your sins. He loves you. Regardless of how you feel about Him. You may have egnored him and neglected him all your life. But he loves you,

^{you see}
~~But~~ God loves you regardless of your feeling toward him. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son." ~~You see~~, God gives to us what we don not deserve. WHY? Because he loves us.

We ~~were~~ ^{are} sinners. And the Bible says because of his great love God sent his son to die for our sins. We didn't do anything to earn it or deserve it. He just loved us. MAN! Who wouldn't want to respond to love like that?

And untill you become a christian, dear friends, whether you want to admit this or not, God says that you cannot love with His love. You really cannot. You can struggle and try all your life, but untill you come to Jesus you don't even have the copactity to love like we have been talking here in this message.

And to all ^{us} ~~you~~ Christians. Don't get over confident. Because there is one thing that stops God's love flowing through your life. There is one thing that grieves the Holy Spirit that produces the love. There is one thing that stops the spirit of God operating in your life. There is one thing: And THAT IS SIN. Sinful attitudes...sinfull motives...sinful actions.....

Listen, sin will block the flow of the Holy Spirit loving through you. You must deal with sin. You must confess it...You must acknowledge it.. And turn it over to the Lord...

^{we} ~~You~~ need the Lord, ^{we} you see. He has all the love ~~you~~ need. That is why ^{we} ~~you~~ need him so much.....

Let's close in prayer