

Love

Why does Paul leave his discussion of spiritual gifts (1 Co.12), to discuss love (1 Co.13) then return to spiritual gifts (1 Co.14)

Love is not a digression, but a necessary part of his teaching

Some used spiritual gifts to show off; they forgot the most basic lesson: 1 Co.10:31

Second basic lesson: yielding self for the good of others. This is not mere forbearance or self-control, but love, greater than all gifts (v.13)

Without love, everything else is nothing (1-3).

Greeks worshipped intellect

Romans, power

- Supernatural gifts / heroic acts mean nothing w/o love

KJV: charity (1611) – love

- V.3, charity without charity?

1. Love suffers long

Long-tempered; slow to anger, slow to take offense, to inflict punishment

Used of God: 1 Pt.3:20; 2 Pt.3:9, 15

- It is patience of injuries w/o paying back (though he has power). Cf. Ja.1:19
- Patience is easy when everyone is kind to us
- 2 Tim.3:10; are we an example?

1 K.21:1-2, Ahab

2. Love is kind

Longsuffering is passive (does not retaliate);
kindness is active

It's one thing to endure offenses, another to
show an enemy kindness

- Kindness of God: Ro.2:5; 11:22
- Mercy for worst sinner, 1 Tim.1:12-17
- Kindness follows God's example

3. Love does not envy

Love does not envy another's blessings.

Ro.1:29; 13:13

- To desire good gifts to serve others is right (12:31)
- To envy others who have a gift is wrong.
1 Co.3:1

4. Love does not parade itself

Ostentatious boasting is the chief idea; braggart. Love does not boast

Origen uses it especially of intellectual pride

Cicero negatively illustrates the word

Some in Corinth do good things for attention
(1 Co.12:21-26)

5. Love is not puffed up

To puff oneself out like a pair of bellows

- Logically follows does not parade itself
1 Co.4:6, 18-19; 5:2; 8:1
- “I am not a man like other men. The laws of morality do not apply to me” – Napoleon

6. Love does not behave rudely

Behave unmannerly. Love has no bad manners; does not act dishonorably; it is tactful; it does nothing that would cause a blush

Cf. Paul to Philemon

At Corinth, rich would not share (ch.11);
tongue speakers promoted themselves
(ch.12); women spoke out (ch.14)

They should have blushed

7. Love does not seek its own

Repeats 1 Co.10:24, 33: they sought their self-interests

Some insist on own rights – forget what they owe others

8. Love is not provoked

KJV added *easily*

- Does not fly into a rage / yield to provocation
- We can control our temper

Nu.12¹ Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married... ² So they said, “Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?” And the LORD heard it. ³ (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.)

9. Love thinks no evil

Accounting term: keeps no record of wrongs;
bears no resentment

- Phm.¹⁸ if you decide to remember his debt, put it on my account.
- Pr.19¹¹ The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to overlook a transgression.

Instead of entering an offense in our account book, we pass the sponge over it to blot out the memory of the deed

- 1 Co.6:1-8

10. Love does not rejoice in iniquity

Ro.1³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

- Do not sympathize with evil
- Lk.19⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it

11. Love rejoices in truth

Truth makes love rejoice

- Rejoicing in another's success may be more difficult than bearing wrongs
- Competition
- Ph.1:12-17. Love is not neutral; it is supportive
- Ph.1:18, love embraces unpleasant truth, covets correction

12. Love bears all things

Love covers, protects, forbears. 1 Pt.4⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”

1 Co.9¹² If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more?

- Bear, endure ... probably fits here as well

13. Love believes all things

Love is optimistic (learned, not innate)

- Not gullible, but gives benefit of the doubt
- Love prefers being too generous to suspecting others unjustly; believes best.
- 1 T.6⁴ he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions...
- Love tries to put a good construction on everything, even when it needs great faith to do so

14. Love hopes all things

When sight corrects faith and proves the worst, love hopes for the best outcome

Even hardened offenders may change

When evils of this life threaten to smother us, hope believes that God will give the victory to good

Love does not despair

15. Love endures all things

Loving hope endures to the end with unshaken confidence in God, especially in personal wrongs. Mt.18:21-22...

Gn.29:20, Jacob's seven years...love!

- When hope is disappointed, love waits for the best

Clement (Rome, AD 96)

“the Master through Noah saved animals
that entered the ark *in concord*”

2 Sm.13:1-4, Amnon