

INTRODUCTION

- In Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus said, "...“YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ (38) This is the great and foremost commandment. (39) The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’
- What does He mean to "love...God" and "your neighbor as yourself"?
- The answer to those questions are the heart of our study today
- We are looking again at the love chapter that is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 13
- Please take your Bibles and join me as we look at verses 4-7
- In these verses, Paul tells us what love is by showing us what it does

He says, (4) Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant,

(5) does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,

(6) does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

(7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

- People today define love in many ways
- It can be emotional or sexual
- But rarely is it sacrificial
- The church needs to express love
- That's the point of verses 4-7
- In those verses love is defined by what it does rather than by what it is
- The Corinthians were not loving
- That's clear by what Paul says In verses 1-3
- Their love was missing
- The only love that was visible was seen in their selfishness
- And that's because they were carnal according to chapter 3
- Their absence of love led them to being "impatient, discontented, envious, inflated, selfish, indecorous (rude), unmindful of the feelings and interests of others, suspicious, resentful, and censorious." (MacDonald, William. [Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments](#). Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print.)
- So Paul now launches into the definition of love as it is seen in verses 4-7
- Again, he defines love by what it does and by this helps us to see what it actually is
- So beginning at verse 4, notice...

LESSON

I. What Love Is (v.4a)

Before we look at the details of verse 4, let's notice a few things about love.

First...

- It is Agape
 - That's the Greek word Paul uses for love in this chapter
 - He uses it 3 times in verse 4 and a total of 14 times in this chapter
 - There are other words for love in the NT like eros, philia, and storge but the one he uses here is agape
 - Agape love is sacrificial and unconditional
 - It's seen by actions
 - John said in 1 John 3:17-18, "But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? (18) Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."
 - Both times John uses this word agape and says it manifests itself in acts of kindness by meeting a brother's need

- He concludes in verse 18 by saying to love "in deed"
- Mere words are not enough
- His brother has a physical need that needs to be met
- If he "has the world's goods," then he can and is to meet it
- To not meet it brings into question his love for God
- Agape love is also seen in how a husband loves his wife
- Ephesians 5:25 says, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her."
- How did Christ love His church? By dying for it
- Husbands are to lay down their lives for their wives
- He is to "sanctify her...with the word" of God (v.26) so that she will be "holy and blameless" (v.27)
- In verses 28-29, Paul further defines what he means by love by saying, "So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; (29) for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church."
- He repeats it again in verse 33, "Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband."

A second thing we see about this word is in verse 13. Paul tells us...

- It is the Greatest Gift (v.13)

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

- Love is greater than faith and hope because it is eternal as God is (1 John 4:8)
- It is the greatest because it is most useful to others
- It is not self-centered but others-centered. (MacDonald, William. [*Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*](#). Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print.)

- It is a Gift from God (Romans 5:5)

(5) and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Romans 5:5 - NASB

Notice what Paul says in verse 4 of 1 Corinthians chapter 13 as he talks about what love does...

- It is Patient with People

- The word used for "patient" is the Greek verb makrothumia
- It's used in the present tense to indicate ongoing action
- Agape love is always patient
- The word "patient" is made up of makros, "long" and thumos, "temper"
- It means "long tempered"

- It is also translated "long-suffering" and "forbearance"
- To be "long tempered" means it is opposed to *haste*
- It is opposed to passionate expressions and thoughts, and to irritability
- The one who possess this patience doesn't fly off the handle
- They are not quick tempered
- That have the state of mind which can bear long when "oppressed or provoked" or "when one seeks to injure [them]" (Barnes, Albert. *Notes on the New Testament: I Corinthians*. Ed. Robert Frew. London: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885. Print.)
- So the word speaks of "self-restraint"
- A person who is patient is "able to avenge himself yet refrains from doing so" (WSNTDICT)
- He "endures injuries inflicted by others" (John MacArthur, *The MacArthur NT Commentary: Galatians*)
- He has a "calm willingness to accept situations that are irritating and painful" (MacArthur)
- He is free from resentment and revenge and has power over his passions (Richison, Grant. *Verse by Verse through the Book of 1 Corinthians*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2007. Print.)
- He has "the broad shoulders on which [he] bears all things" (Preacher's Homiletical Commentary)

- As Romans 12:19-21 says, he "never take[s] [his] own revenge...but [he] leaves room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. (20) "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD." (21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."
- A person with this kind of love loves his enemies by overcoming their evil with good
- In other words, he obeys 1 Thessalonians 5:14 which says, "We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone."
- Lenski says, "The world is full of evil men, and even in our brethren much evil meets us. When this evil strikes us, and our natural reaction would be resentment, indignation, anger, bitter words, blows perhaps, then love steps in, "suffers long," keeps calm, endures, and does this continually no matter how long the offense may persist." (Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1963. Print.)
- So this kind of patience is referring to patience with people, not patience with dreadful circumstances
- When Paul says, "Love is patient," he also has the source of love and patience, God
- God is the God of patience
 - He is called the "God of patience" in Romans 15:5
 - In Romans 2:4, Paul says that it is God's "kindness, tolerance and patience...[that] leads you to repentance."

- Jesus is also the supreme example of enduring injuries inflicted by others
 - Isaiah 53:7 says, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth."
 - When He was before Caiaphas, Matthew 27:63 says He "kept silent."
 - Peter said of Jesus in 1 Peter 2:22-24 that He was an example to follow "WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; (23) and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; (24) and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."
- Believers are to be patient with people
 - We are to "put on a heart of...patience" (Col.3:12)
 - Preachers are to "exhort" with great patience (2 Timothy 4:2)

Just as patience will take anything from others, kindness will give anything to others, even to its enemies. (MacArthur, John F., Jr. [*1 Corinthians*](#). Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.)

- It is Kind to People
 - The word for "Kind" is the Greek verb chrestotes
 - It also is used in the present tense to indicate ongoing action
 - It means to be good-natured, gentle, tender, affectionate. (Barnes, Albert. *Notes on the New Testament: 1 Corinthians*. Ed. Robert Frew. London: Blackie

& Son, 1884–1885. Print.)

- The idea is, that under all provocations and ill-usage it is gentle and mild. (Barnes)
- God is kind
 - Psalm 106:1 says, "Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting."
 - Psalm 34:8 says, "O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"
 - In the NT, Paul speaks of the kindness of God, a kindness that is manifested in Jesus Christ - Ephesians 2:5-7 says, "(5) even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), (6) and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, (7) so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

CONCLUSION

- So the Corinthians were to put away their selfish attitudes and be long tempered and kind to one another because that's what all believers are called to
- Paul said to "put on kindness" (Col.3:12)
- Peter said to "add...brotherly kindness" (2 Peter 1:7)
- Martin Luther said, "Christians must not be sharp and bitter, but gentle, mild, courteous and fair spoken, and such as make others to delight in their company. They can wink at other men's faults, and will be well contented to yield and give place to others, contented to bear with those who are froward and intractable, as

someone said: “Thou must know the manners of thy friend, but thou must not hate them.” Such a one was our Savior Christ. It is said of Peter that he wept often as he remembered the sweet mildness of Christ. It is an excellent virtue and most necessary in every kind of life.”

- Are you patient and kind?
- Do you have tender concern for other believers or are you sharp and bitter?
- Proverbs 15:1 (NASB) A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger
- Philippians 4:5 (NASB) Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near
- The way to patience and kindness is through yielding to the Spirit
- Do you know Jesus?
- Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30 (NASB) Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy [kind] and My burden is light.”
- When people see you do they see Jesus in your life?
- Repent and believe in Him today.
- Let’s pray.