

“LOVE” (I CORINTHIANS 13:4-7)

- I. Context
 - A. The larger context of the letter is the spiritual immaturity of the Corinthian congregation (see 3:1-3)
 - B. The narrower context is the class warfare within the congregation
 - 1. wealthy versus poor (11:21)
 - 2. differing spiritual gifts (12:1-3 and the rest of the chapter)
 - C. The immediate context deals with the attitude behind these contentions and is concluded in 14:1
 - D. The emptiness of a loveless life (13:1-3)
 - 1. note that each of this is a great and respectable deed
 - 2. we should all remember Luke 17:10
 - 3. Adam Clarke = “he who has not the love of God and man filling his heart is like an empty wagon coming violently down a hill: it makes a great noise, because there is nothing in it”
 - 4. Clarke = “I am nothing – nothing in myself, nothing in the sight of God, nothing in the church, and good for nothing to mankind”
 - E. “Agape” is the term here translated “love”
 - 1. Vine = “Love can only be known from the actions it prompts. God’s love is seen in the gift of His Son. But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects. It was an exercise of the Divine will in deliberate choice, made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself. Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered. Love seeks the welfare of all.”
 - 2. as opposed to “phileo”
 - a. Vine = “represents tender affection”
 - b. never used in a command to love God
 - F. David Lipscomb = “Passion is often mistaken for love. They differ widely, yet resemble in some points. Love denies self for the good of object. Passion seeks its own gratification. The test and measure of love is how much of his own pleasure he is willing to forego for the well-being of the object of his love. Man’s love to God is measured by his willingness to sacrifice his own pleasure and his own ways to please God.”
 - G. Lipscomb = “Too often it is a snare to judge himself by what he does rather than by what he is.”
- II. Suffereth Long
 - A. see comments on “Fruit of the Spirit, Longsuffering” page 1 – same root word)
 - B. Matthew Henry = “It can endure evil, injury, and provocation, without being filled with resentment, indignation, or revenge.”
- III. Kind (see comments on “Fruit of the Spirit, Gentleness” page 1 – same root word)
- IV. Envieth Not (see comments on “Works of the Flesh, Emulations” page 3 – same root word)

- V. Vaunteth Not Itself
- A. NKJV = “does not parade itself”
 - B. Only occurrence in Bible
 - C. from a word that suggests a braggart
 - D. Adam Clarke = “does not set itself forward, does not desire to be noticed or applauded”
 - E. Luke 14:7-11 for example of NOT having this trait
 - F. Lipscomb = “This quality is the exact opposite of envy; the one envying in another what is not possessed by ourselves, the other looking down on another for the want of something which we possess.” (examples, “friends of Job” and Luke 13:1-5)
- VI. Is Not Puffed Up
- A. Vine = “used metaphorically in the sense of being puffed up with pride”
 - B. Thayer = “to inflate, blow up, blow out, to cause to swell up”
 - C. other usages in I Corinthians 4:6,18,19; 5:2; 8:1; Colossians 2:18
 - D. Pideful
 1. Proverbs 16:18 – “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”
 2. James 4:10 – “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”
 - E. Lipscomb = “does not indulge in inflated opinions of itself”
- VII. Doth Not Behave Itself Unseemly
- A. NKJV = “does not behave rudely”
 - B. Thayer = “to act unbecomingly”
 - C. Compare to passages that tell us to act in a way that is “becoming” (I Timothy 2:10; Ephesians 5:3)
- VIII. Seeketh Not Her Own
- A. ASV = “seeketh not its own”
 - B. NKJV = “does not seek its own”
 - C. Lipscomb = “Seeks not its own selfish desires and ends, but looks to the good and happiness of all”
- IX. Not Easily Provoked
- A. ASV = “is not provoked”
 - B. NKJV = “is not provoked”
 - C. Thayer = “to irritate, provoke, rouse to anger”
 - D. Translated “stirred” in Acts 17:16
 - E. Lipscomb = “does not readily take offense, nor is it easily excited to anger, or provoked to resent evils”
- X. Thinketh No Evil
- A. ASV = “taketh not account of evil”
 - B. The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament = “does not reckon the evil”
 - C. Lipscomb = “It does not attribute evil motives to others, neither is it suspicious. It desires to think well of those whom it loves, and will not think ill of their motives, or conduct until it is compelled to do so.”
 - D. Does not question motives
 - E. Judges righteous judgment (John 7:24)

- XI. Rejoiceth Not In Iniquity
 - A. ASV = “rejoiceth not in unrighteousness”
 - B. This is not the same Greek word that is translated “sin”
 - C. Translated “unrighteousness” in Romans 9:14
 - D. See Romans 1:32

- XII. Rejoiceth In the Truth
 - A. ASV = “rejoiceth with the truth”
 - B. See II John 4

- XIII. Beareth All Things
 - A. The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament = “covers”
 - B. Vine = “primarily to protect, or preserve by covering, to endure, forbear”
 - C. Realizes there are faults in others, but does not excuse sin
 - D. I Peter 4:8

- XIV. Believeth All Things
 - A. A.T. Robertson = “not gullible, but has faith in men”

- XV. Hopeth All Things
 - A. A.T. Robertson = “sees the bright side of things; does not despair”

- XVI. Endureth All Things
 - A. A.T. Robertson = “perseveres”
 - B. Clarke = “never says of any trial, affliction or insult, that this cannot be endured”
 - C. I Corinthians 10:13

- XVII. Conclusion - Charity Never Faileth (vs. 8)