

In this chapter Paul lists at least 16 characteristics of God.

1 Cor 13:4-13

4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

He says in verse 4 that love is longsuffering.

Jesus silences the Sadducees

- Matt 22:23

After Jesus silenced the Sadducees they thought He would lead people away from their authority as well.

So one of the Pharisees, a lawyer (skilled in the Mosaic law) asked Jesus a question (Matt 22:35), testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Now they're trying to get Him to prioritize

- between the 613 commandments of God.

He takes them back to Deut 6:5. Deut 6:5 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

The only way we can love others

- is if we first Love God

The second commandment Jesus gave them was like the first, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

Vs 4

LOVE SUFFERS LONG OR IS LONGSUFFERING: we are not easily angered Nor do we seek to punish.

When Robert Ingersoll, the famous atheist couldn't exhaust God's patience in just 5 minutes.

In Paul's day and in the Greek culture

- it was a virtue to seek vengeance.

Peter wrote, 2 Peter 3:9

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Jesus' infamous words were, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

Matt 5:43-47 speaking of His love and patience:

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

LOVE IS KIND!

In Col 3:12 we're told to put on kindness, humility, meekness and longsuffering. We are to bear with one another and forgive one another.

"actions speak louder than words."

Prov 20:11

11 Even a child is known by his deeds,
Whether what he does is pure and right.

LOVE DOES NOT ENVY:

There are two kinds of envy:

- 1) Coveting someone else' possessions
- 2) Wishing that the person having something didn't have it

Examples:

Mk 15 - Pilate knew that Jesus had been handed over to him because of envy.

Gen 37 - Joseph sold to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekles of silver. If my calculations are correct that's ½ pound of silver.

James said where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there 3:16.

LOVE DOES NOT PARADE ITSELF: Does not elevate itself above others.

LOVE IS NOT PUFFED UP: pride or self-conceit.

Example: 1 Cor 4:7

7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

- what you have is because
- it was gifted to you
- so why do you boast about your possessions.

Boast only on the cross!

LOVE DOES NOT BEHAVE RUDELy:

There are two Greek words used in the NT for "rude."

Aschēmōnēō, that's the word used here in Corinthians.
to behave in an ugly or shameful manner

The second word for "rude" is Schéma
to shape or to plan. We get the English words scheme and schematic from this word.

Schéma refers to the outward appearance, the shape it takes before others.

It matters how we speak to people.

Paul isn't only concerned with the Christian character,

- but the way he expresses his character outwardly.

1 John 4:20-21

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

DOES NOT SEEK ITS OWN:

- At a very young age we learn,

- “this is mine” or “I want that!”

Paul says in Phil 2:4

4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED:

This word provoked is derived from the Greek word Paroxysmos - It's a sudden violent emotion or action: outburst.

Parable of the prodigal son - Father's compassion

Luke 15:20-32

Was the older thinking,

- “Oh, good, he's gone,
- now all of my dad's possession will one day be mine.”

That's the self-seeking attitude people often have.

It's possible

- to pray for someone to get saved
- then when that person is saved
- you become angry because God has blessed them.

Example - Jonah

- the people of Nineveh repented

Jonah became angry because God spared the Ninevites instead of destroying them.

In the book of Luke,

The elder brother was angry

- that his brother was blessed
- and he himself had not received the same attention.

He not only hated the sin, but he hated the sinner.

He didn't have the same heart as Paul: Gal 6:1,

6 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

He certainly didn't have the heart of his father.

- We see throughout the parable that
- the father was loving to each of his sons.

THINKS NO EVIL:

People who get themselves into bad situations in their life are

- constantly looking over their shoulder.

Then there are the others

- constantly looking back
- because they feel someone wronged them.

Another translation says that “love keeps no record of wrongs.”

We can be grateful

- that the Lord does not keep record of wrongs.

Interestingly the Greek word used for “think” is the same word we get our English word “accountant.” The verb means “to recon, to calculate and by implication it means “to let one’s mind dwell on.”

So when Paul says that Love thinks no evil he’s saying, don’t allow any evil that is thrown your way to be imbedded in your memory bank.

Someone once said,

Tell me the things you remember best and I will tell you what kind of person you are.

1 Cor 13:6-7

6 does not rejoice in iniquity (wickedness/sin), but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

When people rejoice in sin there is no guilt, no shame.

Thank God that He delivers us from the path of the sinner.

Now, don’t mistake a Christian for weakness.

Just because this says that love bears all things, it doesn’t mean that we will put up with anything.

Notice that love endures all things. That’s a military term meaning to stand against the attack of the enemy. When things seem to be caving in around us, God’s love will never fail.

Thus far we’ve been reading of loves temporary aspects. Now Paul turns his attention to the eternal atmosphere.

1 Cor 13:8-13

8 Love never fails. (eternity is where love started and that's where it is destined to live forever. God's love for us is eternal. He said, I will never leave you nor forsake you!)

God has many attributes, most of them are adjectives.

For example, when God is described we see words such as "just, righteous, omnipotent, gracious." When it comes to the attribute of love, God is more than loving.

In fact, Paul is telling the Corinthian church that the gifts they prized most will one day cease but love will continue on.

But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

The word used in the Greek for child is "an infant or a baby." When a baby rambles on we can't understand that child. Paul was telling the Corinthians that they needed to grow up, mature in the Lord.

When Jesus set a child before the disciples and told them that they were to become as little children He didn't mean they should be childish, but childlike.

When Paul says he put away childish things when he became a man, he's speaking of the things he did as a child that people tolerated in hopes he'd one day outgrow those childish things.

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.