

## I Corinthians 13:7 Love and All Things

**1. v. 7 Bears all things:** Greek: *roofs*. Idea- *Covers over to protect*. Love covers over something, not to expose it, but to keep it hidden. It means that love often will bear the offense, the hurt, the sin.

a. A great sin in the church is gossip. Gossip is *bad news behind their back with a bad heart*. Proverbs calls it "*delicious morsels,*" *a tasty treat that promises delight to those who indulge* (Proverbs 18:8; 26:22). It's self-righteous behavior designed to make us feel/look better than others.

b. Resist the urge to criticize because love protects what's under its roof. Love chooses instead to focus on the (Phil. 4:8) good, pure, lovely, things in someone and not the imperfections. The gospel is the perfect example of what this looks like. Jesus is not in the blame game, but rather in the covering over business not counting men's sins against them.

**2. Believes all things:** It covers the weaknesses and then believes the best potential about people. It is not cynical, pessimistic about people; waiting for them to mess up. Nor is it naïve: Prov. 14:15 *The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps*. Love defaults to giving people the benefit of the doubt (within limits of the truth).

Bearing and believing are linked because people will fail you and hurt you, but love is willing to absorb that pain for the sake of the other's good and the calling to relationship.

**Application** - Gossip good/Spread some good. Love believes all things speaks to the present.

**3. Love Hopes all things-** Speaks to the future. It's the same word used for our confident expectation of heaven. When we give up hoping, we are pronouncing a judgment: *you are beyond help*.

**4. Endures all things.** Greek: Remaining/Under a load. It means that much more than putting up with simple things, love doggedly stands firm in the middle of very difficult situations. The idea is that love stays put. It's similar to bears all things, but longer term. When it says that love hopes all things, hope can be at a distance.

All is the key word, the tough part. So much easier if he said, Love believes/hopes/endures **some** things. Love's first reaction is to believe the best about other believers and doesn't default to cynicism despite the pain of sin caused by other people. And when that sin does harm us, love hopes that God will work those things to good as only an in-control God can.

(Questions on back.)

**Grow Group Questions**

1. Have others believed the best about you in the past, even though you didn't give them much reason to hope? If so, how did that help you?

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2. Do you tend to default to cynicism or think the worst of other believers? Where do we draw the line with someone who has repeatedly violated trust or simply bear/endure?

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3. Identify someone who has been a "roof" for you? Someone who supported or protected or concealed you in times of trouble. Have you ever told them how much it meant?

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4. Have you ever repented for gossip? How can I "gossip good" about someone this week?

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5. Is there anyone in your life right now that you can be "believing, hoping and enduring" for? Are you spending time praying for them?

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6. Paul is describing a very high-level love. How is it even possible to do?

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