

**LOVE LESSONS**  
**Love Does . . . NOT!**  
**1 Corinthians 13:4**

Love is a VERB. Paul describes love for us in this passage. While his description is not absolutely COMPLETE, it is COMPREHENSIVE. **He does not tell us everything about love, but he does give us an accurate enough description that we can KNOW it when we SEE it!** Is your life so characterized by love that people RECOGNIZE it in you when they look at you?

One thing that catches my attention in Paul's description of love is that he moves quickly from what LOVE DOES to what LOVE DOES NOT DO! Sometimes, it really is easier to describe something by what it LACKS than by what it HAS (**Describing a person to a profile artist**), although one would be wise to know when this is appropriate. (Would you say: "My wife is NOT a NAG!" Or "Well, my wife is NOT . . . a beauty queen.") The FIRST statement is what I would call a POSITIVE NEGATIVE. The SECOND statement is what I would call a LONELY NIGHT! I digress. But there is more. Because love is often mischaracterized and is even purposely misrepresented by POPULAR CULTURE, Paul feels the need to highlight what you will NOT see when you are looking for love. **In fact, 7 OUT OF THE NEXT 8 descriptions of love that Paul gives are NEGATIVE qualities that are NOT found in love!** [In total, Paul gives 14 characteristics of love. 7 positive & 7 negative.]

Once again, I must remind you that the CONTEXT of this beautiful passage is Paul's attempt to CORRECT the Corinthian's MISUNDERSTANDING and MISUSE of their spiritual gifts. God gives gifts and abilities to his people in the church so that the church can function like a beautiful body or a well-oiled machine! But when those gifts are used in a fashion that DISHONORS the very purpose of their original intention, then they become a WEAPON that WOUNDS rather than a BLESSING that BUILDS others up. **The same is true of ANY ABILITY, BLESSING, or so-called "ADVANTAGE" that God gives to us. It can be used either to BUILD OTHERS UP or to PUT OTHERS DOWN!** Since Paul was addressing some very gifted people, he made it a point to point out how love will NOT mishandle God's good gifts. **This leads me to a LOVE LESSON that is the BASIS of this biblical TRAIN of NOTS:**

**Love flows from a healthy sense of SECURITY.**

**\*Love comes from embracing the truth that YOU ARE LOVED!**

-You can experience this in DAILY LIFE. **[Exercise from WEEK 1]**

-You can receive this from the WORD: (Are you IN the Word?)

-“As I have loved you; love one another!” – Jesus Christ

-“We love, because he first loved us.” - John the Apostle

**\*Loved people do not try to EARN what they already POSSESS.**

-Love comes from an IMMOVABLE POSITION of ACCEPTANCE and WORTH.

\*My search for significance starts with the knowledge of my worth to God!  
**-Therefore, loved people do not FOCUS on what they do NOT have!**

\*PERFORMANCE is NOT the BASIS for their WORTH!

**[My Dad: Son, you preach and sing. I will fix the toilet!]**

**\*Loved people REJOICE in what they DO HAVE and what they CAN DO.**

-They will even WORK ON and IMPROVE what they have!

What are YOUR STRENGTHS? Are you good at writing or building things or cooking or doing math? How are you using your strengths as WORSHIP SERVICE that HELPS the other members of the CHURCH grow stronger and better? Do you even know what GIFTS you bring to CHC? Do you have the gift of teaching or helps or giving?

**[We will study all of the gifts more in detail in our next series.]**

**Do you use your strengths and God-given gifts for the good of others?**

**\*You will not USE what you do not think is VALUABLE!**

-How HARD is it for you to acknowledge the ways God has gifted you?

-Do you BERATE your own gifts and abilities?

**[Woman who told me: I don't really have anything to offer to the church or to God. I REBUKED her with a broken heart! She is WRONG!]**

-This shows a lack of UNDERSTANDING of the nature of the gifts.

-This also demonstrates a lack of TRUST in the nature of the GIVER!

Nature abhors a VACUUM; so does HUMAN NATURE. **If you FEEL like your gifts and abilities are not as important or as significant as the ones that your brothers and sisters around you have, you are likely to start RESENTING or maybe even SABOTAGING the gifts and abilities of those around you in order to find your own worth.** That is a dangerous and divisive road to travel. Sadly, the members of the Church in Corinth were doing this and it was killing the church. So, Paul gives them more LOVE LESSONS through words that he says will NOT be found in love.

**1 Corinthians 13:4 NIV**

**4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.**

**Love does not ENVY.**

ENVY = to BURN with zeal; to COVET earnestly, to JEALOUSLY desire.

-This word can be used of GOOD DESIRE or EVIL DESIRE. Context is king!

\*Paul does encourage us to DESIRE the gifts that **profit the Body** the most!

**1 Corinthians 12:31 NLT**

**31 So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts. But now let me show you a way of life that is best of all. [. . . LOVE]**

**1 Corinthians 14:1 NLT**

**1 Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives--especially the ability to prophesy.**

\*Envy is a sign of insecurity and immaturity: **1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NIV**

1 Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly--mere infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. 3 You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not **acting like mere humans?**

\*The ROOT of ENVY is ACCUSATION against GOD! ["God, you SHORTED me!"]

-To envy what another person has is to ACCUSE GOD of not giving you what you NEED!

**Note: Your neighbor can't make you pretty or skinny or good at math!**

-The immediate CURE for envy? We will see in a minute.

\*First, let's see what puts envy on STEROIDS! [Next LOVE LESSON]

### **Love does not BOAST.**

\*Recognize when you PUT YOURSELF FIRST. [I Am Second]

**-Read: Nancy Leigh DeMoss – 41 Evidences of Pride**

\*REFUSE to DRAW ATTENTION TO yourself FOR yourself!

-Skills and Spiritual gifts are not intended to MAKE MUCH of YOU, but of GOD!

-PROBLEM: Skills and gifts may not increase my value to God, but they do to man!

\*Learn how to RECEIVE PRAISE and DEMONSTRATE GRATITUDE!

### **Proverbs 27:2, 21 NLT**

2 Let someone else praise you, not your own mouth--a stranger, not your own lips. ... 21 Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but a person is tested by being praised.

\*Remind yourself where your blessings originated – **1 Corinthians 4:7 NLT**

7 For what gives you the right to make such a judgment? What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift?

### **Love is not PROUD.**

\*What is a TETRAODONTIDAE? Behold, the PUFFER FISH. [Puffer Fish PICTURES]

-It is actually POISONOUS. [Puffer Fish delicacies that can KILL you!]

-It uses puffing up as a DEFENSE MECHANISM

\*It is meant to INTIMIDATE others

\*It is an EXAGGERATION of what is real.

-It is also a type of CHAMELEON: It copies the environment around it!

\*Sadly, this fish is actually BEAUTIFUL without changing colors.

\*Are YOU a puffer fish? [Proud = Puffed up with an inflated sense of worth]

**-Fuscou: To inflate, cause to blow up; to bear one's self loftily**

- Are you DANGEROUS?
- Are you constantly DEFENSIVE?
- Are you constantly COMPARING yourself to others? **2 Corinthians 10:12 NIV**  
**12 We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.**
- Are you constantly evaluating and imitating others rather than being you?  
 \*RON DUNN'S COUNSEL TO ME – "Be yourself!"

**So, what is the ultimate CURE for envy, boasting, and pride?**

**LOVE CELEBRATES OTHERS!**

- Thank God for them PRIVATELY, even when you FEEL envy creeping in!  
 \*Acknowledge your envy privately to God as well.  
**[QUOTE – Andy Stanley: It Came From Within – P. 187-188]**
- CELEBRATE their blessings WITH them! **[New Car, Promotions, Favor, etc.]**
- THANK THEM for the way that God is using them in YOUR field of influence.  
 \*Especially about those gifts that YOU lack and even wish you had!
- Praise God for and affirm their gifts in the presence of OTHERS!

You may FEEL like a hypocrite when you first start doing this, **but DO IT until it creates JOY in your heart!**

**Love Lessons:**

**You have nothing to LOSE from what others GAIN!**

**You are loved! Choose to express GRATITUDE to God on a daily basis.**

**You are secure! Learn to express PRAISE to people who excel, even where you stumble or fall short.**

Let's pray.