

love and thereby **edifying** and **building one another up** by our hearty service to God and one another, bearing the fruit of His Holy Spirit which resides within us. He contrasts the use of each gift, and this in their most extreme forms, explaining that **without love**, the render us bankrupt. The sounds of tongues which should be used to edify others, becomes a “**noisy gong and clanging cymbal.**” The gift of **prophecy** by which one might even “**know all mysteries and knowledge,**” or the gift of **faith** so strong it could “**remove mountains,**” **without love**, causes us persons to be “**nothing.**” Even the extreme **charity** of giving all away, or even giving of oneself even unto **death**, **without love** “**profits me nothing.**” See here Paul’s use of hyperbole to explain the **prominence** and **importance** of the great **virtue of love**, and how it must be the **character** and **motivation** of our hearts as we serve one another in the church. All our gifts, and worship and busy work in the service of God, without love, are noise in God’s ears and futile efforts that profit us nothing and leave us as nothing. And this is because they do not flow from “**a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith.**”

1 Timothy 1:5 - 5 But **the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.** NASB

1 John 4:7-8 - 7 Beloved, **let us love one another, for love is from God;** and **everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.** 8 The one who does not love does not know God, **for God is love.** NASB

Indeed **love** is the **measure** of **all our religion**, and the sure proof that God is in us and among us! Paul then shines a bright light on the **very nature** and **character** of **love**, giving a colorful description of many of its qualities, so there will be no mistaking in our minds what this virtue of **love really is**, and how we can compare it to the thoughts and intentions of our hearts.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 - 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. 8 Love never fails; NASB

Now here **love** is **described** by **what it does** and **what it does not do**. In the Greek, each of these terms used to describe love is actually a verb. **Love** is **defined** more by its **action** than its feeling, however the two are closely related. Real love gives **demonstration** with actions to its existence in the **heart**. As Paul unfolds his description of love, consider that because **God is love** (1 John 4:7), that these virtues are the very character and nature of God. One other consideration of this text is Paul’s **correction** to the **Corinthians**. Here Paul is correcting many of their unloving actions toward one another, and these can be seen in much of the context of the letter.

Love is patient – Love is by its nature forbearing and willing to suffer long with others because of its genuine desire for the good of the other. Love doesn’t lose its cool, but patiently bears with others. It is “**slow to anger**” and it **endures patiently**, even with those who have provoked or injured us.

Psalm 86:15 - 15 But Thou, O Lord, art **a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness** and truth. NASB

Consider the patience of God with the sinfulness of mankind. God demonstrates His love for us by **His unlimited patience**, suffering long with our **sinful rebellion** and yet pursuing us by sending His only Holy Son to die in the place of us sinners.

1 John 4:10-11 - 10 In **this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son** to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, **we also ought to love one another.** NASB

Christian love gives **demonstration** to its reality by showing this love even in the most difficult of circumstances. Love is not only patient with others who have wronged us, but goes beyond such patience to do them good. See in the words of Jesus the high calling of Christian love.

Luke 6:27-28 - 27 "But I say to you who hear, **love your enemies, do good to those who hate you**, 28 **ble**ss those who curse you, **pray** for those who mistreat you. NASB

love is kind – The Lord is “**gracious and merciful**,” and “**abounding in lovingkindness**.” Consider God’s benevolent disposition toward His creatures.

Psalm 145:8-9 - 8 The **Lord is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger** and **great in lovingkindness**. 9 The **Lord is good to all**. And His **mercies are over all His works**. NASB

Love is kind and desires for all to be happy and blessed. It has genuine concern for others. People who **truly love** others will be **kind** to them, and **do them good**, and will be gentle, not severe and harsh. Love is courteous because it desires the happiness of others. Love is kind and therefore good-natured, gentle, tender, affectionate. Love has a benevolent disposition toward others. Consider the **kind action of Christ** in becoming a man forever and giving His life on the **Cross** to die for our sins and injuries against God. **is not jealous** – Since love has a **benevolent disposition** toward others, it **rejoices** when others are **blessed** and in a happy state. Love does not jealously desire what good others possess, but rather seeks the benefit and prosperity of others. It is **unloving** to be **jealous** or **envious** of the good that others have. Rather love rejoices when others are blessed.

Romans 13:8-10 - 8 Owe nothing to anyone except **to love one another**; for **he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law**. 9 For this, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10 **Love does no wrong to a neighbor**; love therefore is the fulfillment of the law. NASB

love does not brag - Love takes not take a high view of self, but sees others as more important than itself. Love is humble and because love is truly humble it does not seek to exalt itself above others, or seek to demean or disrespect them in any way. Therefore it **never brags** or **boasts** of its own good. It is unloving to brag or boast. Therefore, **love does not brag** of its own good or accomplishments, but rather **commends others** and rejoices with others in there good and accomplishments.

is not arrogant - Love is **not proud** but rather **humble**. See here one of the roots of love in the heart is **humility**, and without a **humble disposition** toward others we **cannot truly love**. Having genuine concern for others, love **does not act** or **speak** in an **arrogant** way, but rather is **considerate of others** and concerns itself with how others will think or feel as a result of its actions. Love looks after the interests of others because of its humble poster toward others.

Philippians 2:1-4 - If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any **consolation of love**, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, **maintaining the same love**, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 **Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind** let each of you regard **one another as more important than himself**; 4 **do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others**. NASB

Consider the humility of **Christ** in leaving the glory of heaven to come to this sinful world and die on a Cross.

does not act unbecomingly – Love is **not rude**. It doesn’t treat others harshly, disgracefully or embarrass them. It behaves in a way that is **fitting** and **proper** in the midst of whatever situation it exists. Love is considerate of others. **Love respects** superiors and subordinates alike, and treats each person with the **dignity** and **respect** as is proper for fellow human beings, made in God’s image. Having genuine concern for others, it is careful not to put others in an embarrassing or uncomfortable position by its own audacity or rudeness, but rather seeks their **respect** and **honor** whenever possible. Love has a gracious, benevolent and humble posture toward others and therefore cannot