

The Heart of Love

1 Corinthians 13: 4-7

Today we are celebrating Mother's Day, a day set aside to honor our mothers and consider the impact they each made in our lives. I am truly thankful for a godly mother, one who sacrificed greatly for me, and pointed me to Jesus. I am blessed with a godly wife, who has been a wonderful mother to our children. No doubt our world is a much better place to live because of the influence of mothers.

As I pondered what to share today, I was reminded of a mother's love. If a mother is what she ought to be, she will be known for her love and devotion. Apart from the love of Christ, we experience no greater love than the love of a mother. As believers we are expected to show love, one to another. Our Lord modeled love for us as He bled and died on the cross for our sin. No greater love has ever been shown than the love of Christ. We are never more like our Lord than when we love others. [John 13:35](#) – *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

We have read a portion of the great chapter on love. As we consider the [aspects](#) of love revealed in the text, I hope we will be challenged and encouraged to possess and show the love of Christ in a world that desperately needs love. I want to discuss: [The Heart of Love](#).

I. The Character of Love (4-5) – [Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,](#) ^[5] [Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.](#) In these verses, Paul described the gracious character of love. The word translated charity in the King James text is the Greek word *Agape*. This speaks of God's love. We are admonished to show the love of God. We find that:

- **Love is Patient** – Love suffers long. This speaks of “*patient endurance under provocation; literally long-tempered.*” Love is not impatient or one that seeks “pay back.”
- **Love is Kind** – This speaks of goodness that goes forth in order to benefit others. It is respectful of others and always considerate of their needs. It is “*courteous, good, giving, showing and extending favor.*”
- **Love is not Envious** – Real love is never jealous. Love doesn't resent the blessings of others, but rejoices in their prosperity.

- **Love is not Boastful** – Love never vaunts itself. It does not “*make a parade; it does not brag or boast.*” It does not seek to be the center of attention. Love allows others to enjoy their moments of success, but refrains from bragging itself.
- **Love is not Arrogant** – Similar to never vaunting itself, love is never “puffed up.” Love is not arrogant or proud. In fact, it stands in humility, realizing all we possess comes from the good hand of God. Real love never seeks its own praise.
- **Love is not Rude** – Love does not behave itself unseemly. Love is never rude. It always seeks to treat others with compassion and humility. Love keeps our emotions in check. It allows us to be consistent in our witness and labor for the Lord among others. Real love allows us to be a light for the Lord.
- **Love is not Self-Centered** – Love seeks not her own. It is never selfish or self-centered. God’s love is not one that seeks only its well-being. It is genuinely concerned with the needs and desires of other. Love allows us to place others’ needs ahead of our own. Did Jesus not place our needs above His as He offered Himself the sacrifice for our sin?
- **Love is not easily Provoked** – Love is willing to yield to the wants of others. It is submissive and kind. Love does not keep a record of past wrongs, but rather overlooks and forgives. It is not adamant about being served or promoted.
- **Love thinks no Evil** – It “*takes no worthless inventory.*” Love responds in a godly way. It does not dwell on the past or injustices that have come its way; love that is not persuaded or motivated by the actions of others. It always looks for good in a situation, rather than being negative and seeking fault or blame. It is not quick to jump to conclusions or embrace rumors.

II. The Conviction in Love (6) – [Love] [Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.](#) Paul revealed that genuine love is always shaped and held by conviction. Love is pure. Agape love never rejoices in iniquity. It does not take pleasure in the sin or rebellion of others. It is not quick to judge or assume the worst. Love seeks to resist gossip, as it rejoices in truth. Love will cause one to remain silent when others seek to spread rumors or bad news. Love wants to believe the best, while refusing to engage in unnecessary gossip.

- We likely never considered slander and gossip to be the byproduct of a lack of genuine love, but clearly it is. We know that bad news or gossip will spread quickly, while truth often goes untold. Dr. Adrian Rogers addressed this passage with these words – *Like a lady said, "You know, my pastor said don't say anything unless it's good, and boy, is this good." They rejoice in iniquity. They rejoice to tell these things. They seem to be glad about some injustice. They seem to regale in saying bad things about other people. And you tell them something bad, and they say, "Oh,*

that's too bad, that's too bad. Is there anything else? We want to know more." A wise man has said, "Before you listen to anything about another member of the church, or before you say anything, you make it pass through these three gates. Number one, is it true? Number two, is it kind? Number three, is it necessary?"ⁱ

III. The Commitment of Love (7) – [Love] **Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.** Finally we discover the commitment love possesses. We find that:

➤ **Love Forgives** – Love bears all things. This has a dual meaning. It means both “*to cover,*” and “*to hold up under all things.*” Love will endure under the onslaught of adversity and unkindness, and yet it is willing to cover the faults of others. It does not seek to expose or ridicule. There is no pleasure in the weakness of others.

Love is consistent in that it isn't affected or dictated by circumstances. Love is not swayed or changed by the actions or failure of others. Love remains even if it must overlook failure.

➤ **Love Believes** – Love seeks to look at every situation in the best possible light. It does not seek to undermine, but to uplift and encourage. It determines to trust, believe, and remain confident.

➤ **Love Hopes** – Love never loses hope. It never resigns to defeat or failure. Love expects the best possible outcome in every situation.

➤ **Love Endures** – This is actually a military term. Love “*does not give up the fort; it stands its ground, never abandoning its post.*” Love is not fickle or passing; it is not here one moment and gone the next. Love refuses to allow difficulties and strife to overcome it. Love refuses to cease for any reason!

The love Christ showed for us was enduring. He refused to abandon the work of redemption. His love took Him all the way to the cross, where He willingly bore our sin and endured the wrath of God on our behalf. Had He been unwilling to go all the way, we would yet be in our sin. We must show the same love toward others, committed to love as long as we live.

Conclusion: As we celebrate Mother's Day, I am truly thankful for a mother's love. I am most thankful for the love of my Savior. He loved each of us enough to die for our sin and provide for our salvation. He rose again, triumphant over death, and is gone away to prepare a place for us in eternity. What love we have received. We have been given much; I pray we will share the love of Christ with others.

Is your love what it ought to be today? Are you struggling to love as Christ does? Maybe you need to come and share your burden with the Lord. Loving as Christ loves is contrary to our nature. We cannot show such love apart from the Lord. If you are yet unsaved, you haven't experienced His great love. Come to Him today and receive salvation!

ⁱ The Adrian Rogers Legacy Collection - The Adrian Rogers Legacy Collection – Sermons.