

## The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians

### The Characteristics of Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-6

1. Love is Essential (vs.1-3)  
If it were possible to excel in all of the areas of spiritual gifts and in demonstrable acts of discipleship and yet be devoid of love, it is of no benefit to anyone.
2. Love is Patient (v.4)  
Patience is not merely waiting quietly; patience is the activity of maintaining a peaceful spirit while bearing up under provocation or persecution without complaint and without losing heart.
3. Love is Kind (v.4)  
Kindness is the activity of usefulness and willing assistance that is expressed toward others.
4. Love is Not Jealous (v.4)  
This word means to be zealously affected, and it can be in either a good or a bad sense. The meaning here is experiencing an intense negative feeling over another person's achievements or success. Jealousy is a signature problem in the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 1:11; 3:3) and is a ready source of discord for any Christian at any time (James 4:2).
5. Love Does Not Brag (v.4)  
This is the only place in the Bible where this word appears. It means to heap praise upon yourself. It is characterized by self-centered words and actions with a desire to call attention to oneself. It is the action of trying to make others jealous of what you have.
6. Love is Not Arrogant (v.4)  
This is the idea of being puffed-up and inflated (cf. Col. 2:18). This was another of the noteworthy characteristics of the Corinthian church that Paul made reference to five different times prior to this text (1 Cor. 4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; 8:1). Instead of responding as they ought to other servants in the church (1 Cor 4:6) or to sin in their midst (1 Cor. 5:2), they acted with arrogance.
7. Love Does Not Act Unbecomingly (v.5)  
This is the idea of acting dishonorably, indecently, or possibly in a rude manner. The Septuagint (LXX) uses this word to refer to someone who is naked instead of being clothed or properly cared for (cf. Ezek 16:7, 22, 39). This may be connected with the actions of the women who prayed with their heads uncovered (1 Cor. 11:4ff) or to the actions of those who were gorging themselves at the Lord's table (1 Cor. 11:20ff).
8. Love Does Not Seek Its Own (v.5)  
This is the simple activity of seeking and valuing oneself and one's own interests ahead of another (cf. Phil 2:4, 21). Even Jesus did not seek His own glory, but the glory of the Father (cf. John 7:18; Phil 2:4ff).
9. Love is Not Provoked (v.5)  
This word has the idea of being irritated into action. Love is not irritated. There is a proper provocation into action by the sinful world around us (cf. Acts 17:16), but love is not irritated, but instead exercises forbearance (cf. v.4).
10. Love Does Not Take Into Account a Wrong Suffered (v.5)  
Love does not keep a list of wrongs, or perceived wrongs, done to oneself so as to make sure that the score is eventually settled. We are to strive to emulate Christ in not holding an account of the sins of our brethren (cf. 2 Cor. 5:19). Instead, we are to respond to that wrong with good and love (cf. Rom 12:21).
11. Love does Not Rejoice in Unrighteousness (v.6)  
Love does not find happiness or a state of gladness in things that are wicked, unjust, or unrighteous. We must not be fooled into toleration or agreement with unrighteousness because it is sin (cf. 1 John 5:17). It is not loving to rejoice with or approve of what is wicked (cf. Rom. 1:32).
12. Love Rejoices with the Truth (v.6)  
Love is oriented to what is good and right and true, and will resound with joy for what is true (Luke 15:6, 9; cf. 2 John 4).

## The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians

### The Characteristics of Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-6

1. Love is Essential (vs.1-3)  
If it were possible to excel in all of the areas of spiritual gifts and in demonstrable acts of discipleship and yet be devoid of love, it is of no benefit to anyone.
2. Love is Patient (v.4)  
Patience is not merely waiting quietly; patience is the activity of maintaining a peaceful spirit while bearing up under provocation or persecution without complaint and without losing heart.
3. Love is Kind (v.4)  
Kindness is the activity of usefulness and willing assistance that is expressed toward others.
4. Love is Not Jealous (v.4)  
This word means to be zealously affected, and it can be in either a good or a bad sense. The meaning here is experiencing an intense negative feeling over another person's achievements or success. Jealousy is a signature problem in the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 1:11; 3:3) and is a ready source of discord for any Christian at any time (James 4:2).
5. Love Does Not Brag (v.4)  
This is the only place in the Bible where this word appears. It means to heap praise upon yourself. It is characterized by self-centered words and actions with a desire to call attention to oneself. It is the action of trying to make others jealous of what you have.
6. Love is Not Arrogant (v.4)  
This is the idea of being puffed-up and inflated (cf. Col. 2:18). This was another of the noteworthy characteristics of the Corinthian church that Paul made reference to five different times prior to this text (1 Cor. 4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; 8:1). Instead of responding as they ought to other servants in the church (1 Cor 4:6) or to sin in their midst (1 Cor. 5:2), they acted with arrogance.
7. Love Does Not Act Unbecomingly (v.5)  
This is the idea of acting dishonorably, indecently, or possibly in a rude manner. The Septuagint (LXX) uses this word to refer to someone who is naked instead of being clothed or properly cared for (cf. Ezek 16:7, 22, 39). This may be connected with the actions of the women who prayed with their heads uncovered (1 Cor. 11:4ff) or to the actions of those who were gorging themselves at the Lord's table (1 Cor. 11:20ff).
8. Love Does Not Seek Its Own (v.5)  
This is the simple activity of seeking and valuing oneself and one's own interests ahead of another (cf. Phil 2:4, 21). Even Jesus did not seek His own glory, but the glory of the Father (cf. John 7:18; Phil 2:4ff).
9. Love is Not Provoked (v.5)  
This word has the idea of being irritated into action. Love is not irritated. There is a proper provocation into action by the sinful world around us (cf. Acts 17:16), but love is not irritated, but instead exercises forbearance (cf. v.4).
10. Love Does Not Take Into Account a Wrong Suffered (v.5)  
Love does not keep a list of wrongs, or perceived wrongs, done to oneself so as to make sure that the score is eventually settled. We are to strive to emulate Christ in not holding an account of the sins of our brethren (cf. 2 Cor. 5:19). Instead, we are to respond to that wrong with good and love (cf. Rom 12:21).
11. Love does Not Rejoice in Unrighteousness (v.6)  
Love does not find happiness or a state of gladness in things that are wicked, unjust, or unrighteous. We must not be fooled into toleration or agreement with unrighteousness because it is sin (cf. 1 John 5:17). It is not loving to rejoice with or approve of what is wicked (cf. Rom. 1:32).
12. Love Rejoices with the Truth (v.6)  
Love is oriented to what is good and right and true, and will resound with joy for what is true (Luke 15:6, 9; cf. 2 John 4).