

Introduction:

- Revival and Love was my last Sunday message. In it we looked at: Where Does Love Come From, Hosting the Holy Spirit, and The Culture of Heaven. I want to continue in the theme of love that we have been studying
- The Apostle Paul in 1 Cor 13 is addressing an 'on fire' church that is most carnal culture.
 - Carnality has to do with our personal selfishness, acts of the flesh.
 - Though ministry was happening with the accelerator to the floor, it was taking place in a most selfish culture. So Paul seeks to introduce them to a more excellent way. He begins defining the culture of heaven by defining Agape Love.
 - Remember, agape love is that love which seeks the good of others!
- Love Is:
 - *"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends/fails."* (1 Corinthians 13:4-8, ESV)

I. Love Is And Love Is NotA. *"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude."*

1. Agape love is the highest kind of love known to man.
2. It is how God, himself loves us. It gives and expects nothing in return to stay motivated to love.
3. This is where Paul begins to give us the characteristics of agape love.

B. Love is Patient.

1. The word patient comes from a Greek word meaning 'long duration to anger.' This person does not know when to stop, quit or give up.
2. Agape becomes more determined as the struggle intensifies. Agape love prevents you from giving up on people.

C. Love is kind.

1. 'Kind' comes from a Greek word meaning to be compliant to the needs of others. Agape love helps you to change to become what others need you to be. It considers others before itself. I am not talking about being codependent or evil. I open the door for a mom with two kids a stroller and diaper bag. I am kind. I anticipate needs and act on behalf of.
2. Jesus was kind to lepers, bleeding women, demoniacs, etc. He became what they needed Him to be. He touched those that society had marginalized and brought them back in. Jesus was kind to the woman caught in adultery and was about to be stoned. He rebuked her accusers, showed her kindness, and told her to sin no more. God's love is patient and kind! That's who He is.
3. Let pause and ask ourselves, "How am I doing in the patience and kindness

realm?" Particularly with my family.

D. Love does not: "... *love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant*" (1 Cor 13:4, ESV)

1. Envy -

- a) comes from the Greek word 'Zelos,' from which we get the word zealot. One who is envious is zealous about getting his own personal plans and desires, even at the expense of others.
- b) You could quickly call this person self-centered and ambitious. He does not consider the needs of others. It is the opposite of being kind. Agape is kind; it does not envy. Real love does not think of itself first; it thinks of others.

2. Boast

- a) Love does not boast. The word boast comes from a word that means 'lots of self-talk.' It describes a person who continually promotes and exaggerates about himself.
- b) It also describes a person who never seems to stop talking because they think what they have to say is so important. It is annoying!
- c) Agape love is so secure it does not need to speak about itself. Agape wants to focus on others and edify them because they are valuable.

E. Love is not:

- 1. Love is not arrogant. To be arrogant is to be puffed up (inflated) with thoughts and words about oneself. It thinks too highly of itself because of pride.
 - a) Agape never does this because it thinks so highly of others.
 - b) So, what do you see as you look into the mirror of God's word today?
- 2. Love is not rude.
 - a) Love is so beautiful, especially when we take the time to look at all the different facets of it. Paul states that love is not rude. Rude comes from a word meaning to lack craftsmanship. We have all experienced someone being rude to us.
 - b) Rudeness is dishonorable behavior towards another. It is not living up to kingdom standards in our interactions with others. Love is honorable towards others.
- 3. Love is not selfish. Therefore it does not demand its own way. Love considers others better than itself. Love is 'others' focused and has others in mind or more important than itself.
- 4. Love is not irritable. This means that love is not easily provoked, irritated, or stirred to anger. What does it take to get you provoked, irritated, or angry? To be quickly stirred to anger or irritated is unbecoming of a Christian because it separates and divides people.

II. Love Keeps No Record Of Wrongs

A. Love keeps no record of wrongs.

- B. Record books are associated with pain. Therefore, keeping records of wrongs is so easy because, most often, they are associated with pain. And pain has a way of leaving a mark on the soul.
- C. Love keeps no record of wrongs because love is quick to forgive.
 1. If you are holding a list of wrongs done to you, chances are you living with unforgiveness. Unforgiveness is a silent killer of people. It eats away at the soul like cancer.
 2. Take time to check your list. Forgive those who have hurt you. Remember Jesus' word, "Father, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing."
 3. Love gives and gives and expects nothing in return to stay motivated to love more.

III. Love Rejoices With The Truth!

- A. Love... *"does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth."* (1 Cor 13:6, ESV)
 1. Have you ever secretly or openly rejoiced when someone you dislike had fallen upon hard times or difficulties? You may have even said, *"Serves him right! He deserved that."*
 2. Let it be known that this is not how God reacts.
- B. The word 'rejoice' is used twice in verse six.
 1. Rejoice comes from the Greek word 'chairō,' which means to be filled with joy and gladness. Paul is saying that it matters what you are glad and joyful about.
 2. In the first instance, Paul says that those filled with agape love do not rejoice at people we dislike encountering difficult times.
 - a) Love does not feel thrilled by others' misfortunes.
 - b) Love does not rejoice at injustice, dishonesty, or wrong.
 3. The second part of the verse says that love rejoices with the truth or is delighted with the truth! Love is thrilled at the expressions of good and righteousness in people's lives.
- C. How we respond to other people's misfortunes or their promotions is important to God. Do you rejoice at others' healings? Are you thrilled when others experience blessings? What about those you dislike? Are you secretly smiling when they encounter trouble?
 1. Love does not rejoice at injustice or things done wrong. But, it does rejoice in thrilled ways at the truth.
 2. How you respond to other people's trouble or blessings says much about you and your level of spiritual maturity. Love rejoices with the truth!

IV. Love Does Not Quit

- A. *"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."* (1 Cor 13:7, ESV) These four statements are statement of intensity!

- B. Love bears all things.
1. 'Bears all things' comes from the Greek word 'stego,' meaning to cover, protect, and shield. When agape love is near, it covers people like a roof to protect and shield them.
 2. This has nothing to do with enabling! This is "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing!"
- C. Love believes all things.
1. 'Believes' means putting faith or trust in someone or something.
 2. Faith has the ability to believe the best in every situation.
 3. It makes no room for doubt but chooses to see the best. Agape love believes the best in people. It refuses to give up. It does not know how to quit. This is how our God loves us!
- D. Love hopes all things.
1. 'Hopes' all things. It always expects and anticipates the best. The Greek word 'elpidzo' means an expectation of good things. The agape of God always expects the best in others. It lives anticipating the best being seen in others. Again, it refuses to quit or give up expecting!
 2. Agape loves hope when everything in the natural says "NO!"
- E. Love endures all things.
1. The word 'endures' comes from a word meaning to abide under or stay under.
 2. Ie, It is a picture of a person under orders to do a thing. They are not allowed to surrender or give in. We are under the cover of God's love therefore we are able to endure in love. Ie. Corrie Ten Boom - concentration camp was able to love her captors.
 3. This gives us the picture of the facet of agape love that will never throw in the towel! God never quits on anyone, and neither should we!
 4. Love bears all, believes all, hopes all, and endures all. Love does not quit! It is committed to the end! That's intense!

V. Love Never Fails

- A. "*Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end]. ...*" (1 Corinthians 13:8, AMP)
1. What a powerful statement! Love never fails!
 2. Think about that: Love never fails. Paul has just shared fifteen characteristics of agape love, and his summary is: Love never fails! People may let you down. You may let yourself down, but love never fails.
- B. The word translated 'fail' in our passage is the Greek word 'pipto.' It means to fall from a high position or to plunge from an elevated place.
1. Ie. Sometimes it was used to speak of a great warrior who dies in battle.
 2. 'Pipto' or 'fails' speaks of ruin, destruction, and disappointment.

3. But Paul is saying that agape love will never fall, never fail, and never disappoint!
 - a) The word 'never' is written to communicate "Never! Not ever! At no time" will love ever fall, fail, or discourage.
 - b) This kind of love, agape love, will never come to an end or become obsolete. With this kind of love in our hearts, it must be understood and realized that this kind of love is dependable!
 - c) This kind of love shakes nations, shake communities, awakens hearts!

Conclusion:

- **This love is the God kind of love, agape love.**
 - It is the highest love known to humanity. It is how God loves. It gives and gives and expects nothing in return to stay motivated to love all the more.
 - Oh, that the church would excel in living and giving this kind of love away to family, acquaintances, and strangers.
 - Agape love seeks the good of others.
- **LOVE NEVER FAILS!!! This is the culture of heaven!**
- When you examine Pauls words, you see how easily you can fulfill the whole book by doing the two commands: Love God and love each other.