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In chapter 13, today we're going to look at what some people call the love chapter. But it's really what God wants us to know in order to be able to fully complete His will and His way. Now in Scripture when it talks about love, and here when charity, they use charity, if you do a Greek study you'll find out that that word is translated love some places, it's translated charity others.

But there are really three words, three main words that the Greeks had for love. The first one was eros, that was a sexual love, a lust love. That word eros is never used in Scripture.

The second word for love is phylo or phyla, that's a brotherly love, a concern, you know, a friendship type of love. You know the city Philadelphia, they call it the city of brotherly love, that comes from phylo, delphia. And then the third word is this word here, this sometimes people call the agape love.

Now many times as we look at this we want to say well, yeah God says I have to love you so I love you. No, when it's talking about love it's not meaning, it doesn't mean just saying so. It's a word of action, but even more than that as we go through it, when it says that we are to have this kind of love, this is, you know we say God is love, and we say well that's an attribute of God, that's who He is, it's the same thing here.

When we're talking about love here in this chapter and other places, it means that love should be not just what you do, but who you are, because that will determine what you do. Anybody know what a kleptomaniac is? You know they see, oh I see we got one that, no. It's somebody who just walks along and if they see something they want they take it.

They can't help themselves, that's who they are. Now they can learn not to after some trials and after going through some, you know, some good counseling, but deep inside they can't help themselves. And people tell you that.

But that's the way it should be with love for us. You should be so infused with the love of God that you can't help yourself for loving others. It's just who you are.

Matter of fact, you may be thinking, well how can I love like that? Well first of all, if you're a born again believer, if you've trusted Christ, if you're a child of God, you have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you, you have the fruit of the Holy Spirit. What's the first one? For the fruit of the Spirit is love. So one of the reasons you can say that you have love in you is you have the fruit of the Spirit, love.

We also know that God is love and the Holy Spirit dwelling within you is God and Jesus Christ says He dwells within you, He's God. And if God is love and He dwells within you,

you have the ability, the capability to love the way Christ loved because that's who you are, or at least you should be. Say, well wait a minute, wait a minute, I know God loves me but sometimes I don't feel that love.

Well, I saw an illustration today about that. If it's outside, if it's pouring rain, you put up an umbrella so you don't get wet. The umbrella stops the rain from getting on you but it doesn't stop the rain.

And love's the same way. God's love is shed upon you all the time. God's ability for you to love is there all the time but sometimes if we're not careful, we'll put up umbrellas.

And that's what this chapter's all about. What love can do but if you do the opposite, you're essentially putting up an umbrella for God's love working through you, for you being love. Let's look.

First three verses just basically tells us some of the results of doing things for God but not doing them because of love. Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not charity, I become a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and though I have all faith that I can remove mountains and have no charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the people and though I give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profited me nothing. You see, many of the people here in the Corinthian church and many of the people in the church today, they're saying, well, I have a lot of faith. Or I can preach the word of God or in charismatic church, I speak in tongues.

But then you see them in everyday action and they're just nasty people. They have no love for anybody but themselves. And that's what he's saying here.

Many times if we're not careful, we can do the will of God. We can exhibit the gifts of God in our life. But if you're doing them for the wrong reasons, they're nothing.

That means God doesn't accept them. Boy, that's a wake-up call, isn't it? But then he goes on. We're not going to stay there because that, you know, I like the one where you have enough faith to move mountains.

Remember what Jesus said, you only have the faith of a grain of mustard seed. You can say that mountain be that removed and be removed. Can you imagine having that much faith? But if you start doing it and you get so prideful going, look, watch this, watch this, mountain be removed.

And everybody's like, whoa, you're not doing it because of love, you're doing it for self. And that's the kind of thing he means. He wants us to use the spiritual gifts.

He's just spent a couple of chapters talking about them. But if we don't use the spiritual gifts with love, they only benefit you and not everybody else. Another thing interesting about this word love is, yes, sometimes as we go through these different attributes of love, the way it shows itself, sometimes it has to do with circumstances.

Most of the time it has to do with our dealings with people. Somebody once said, you know, the ministry would be great if it wasn't for people. God says the ministry is great because of people.

Let's look at these. Verse four, charity, self-worth long. Very first one.

That means it's patient. Has the idea, remember, it has the idea of being patient with people. Probably all of us at some point become impatient with people.

But if love is who you are, then you'll learn that it will allow you to be patient with people, even those that just drive you nuts. Because we start looking at people the way God looks at people. Just like as a believer, you can't help yourself loving if you allow God to work through you, sinners can't help being sinners.

So love suffers long. It just patiently endures people, not always circumstances, it can do that too, but mostly people. Think about how you deal with people.

How patient are you? Well, if you allow God's love to work through you, you'll be more patient than you already are. You know, I didn't get to it. Some other things came up.

I was going to come up with a list of all these things that love is. And underneath each one, I was going to put one to ten. You can do this in your head.

One to ten. And after we discuss each one, you can rate yourself on how I exhibit love in that area. One being poor, ten being very loving.

So, when it comes to being patient with people, how would you rate yourself? Well, if it's not a nine or a ten, you need to work on it. It says it's also kind. Love is kind.

That just means to treat people nicely, doing the right thing. Let me ask you a question. Remember the story of the woman caught in adultery? And all the Jews, the leaders said, stoner, that's what the law says.

Come on, brothers, let's pick up some rocks and throw it to this woman. What'd Jesus say? He stood there and said, ye without sin cast the first stone. So if you were there then, you see, Jesus was kind.

The rulers weren't. If you were there then, which side would you have stood on, the side of Jesus or the side of the people wanting to enforce the law and kill this woman? That's what kindness means, standing up for people. Love is kind.

Always acts in the best interest. It's just nice. Ephesians 4.32, Scripture says, be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Now, I'm going to go through these kind of quick because there's a lot of them and time is short, but we need to really work on these. Remember, love should be who you are. So when somebody says you're kind, you can say, that's because of the love of God that works in me.

If someone says you're a jerk, your mind can say, I need to work on that kindness. What's the next one? Uh-oh. Charity envieth not.

Charity, it doesn't covet, to envy means doesn't covet or be jealous. That means you see somebody, something really good happens in their life. And all you do is, oh man, I can't believe that.

Why does it always happen to them? I want what they have. That's covetousness. Or jealousy is, I wish they would lose what they have.

So we're equal. But it says if you love, if you love, it won't envy. It won't covet or be jealous of what somebody else has or what somebody else does or what happens in somebody else's life.

You know, we just read a few verses in scripture last week, I believe it was, where it says we're to weep with those that weep and rejoice with those that rejoice. All right? Those that envy only like to weep with those that weep. They don't want to rejoice with those that rejoice.

So do you envy what somebody else has? I know sometimes I tease people. I hear somebody, something good happens to them. I'll go like, man, I'm glad for you, but I'm jealous.

I'm just teasing. But some people are serious. If you're envious of what somebody else has, you need to work on that.

Oh, what's next? Charity vaunteth not itself is not puffed up. Well, being puffed up means prideful. And love is not prideful.

And we can be prideful in all kinds of things. Remember the scribes and Pharisees? Here's how they prayed. They were prideful in the fact they prayed all the time.

But their prayer says, God, thank you that I'm not a Gentile, a heathen, or I don't sin like other people. And everybody, you know, at the time, people would look at them and go, oh, look at how much they pray. But it wasn't out of love.

It was out of pride. So everybody would look at them and go, what a great person that is.

But love is not prideful.

Love doesn't look at others and think I'm better than they are. Oh, well, I mean, if you're in a, and it's a sinful type of thing. I understand there are some times where prideful, the whole in the Olympics, person who comes in first, you know, will say, well, I'm better than the person who come in second.

That's just in that one little area. And it's just, you know, but if they keep saying, well, I'm better than that person in all areas, who are you better than? Ask yourself that. Who do you look around and go, man, I'm better than they are.

That's pride. Remember the old saying, but for the grace of God, there go I. I know as a pastor, sometimes I counsel with people. And after I get done, I'm thinking to myself, thank you, Lord, that I don't have to go through some of these things, at least not now.

I thank God. And this is vaunted not itself. That means to, I wrote all these down, vaunteth to boast or be a braggart.

Now sometimes we boast, we brag more out of jest than out of seriousness. But if you really start to believe it, you start lifting yourself up. I'm better than everybody.

Why? I'm the best preacher that's ever lived. No, I'm not. But if we're not careful, we brag or we boast, and it's not because of love.

So on your list, when it comes to envy, where are you, one or a ten? When it comes to bragging and pride, are you a one or a ten? Ah, does not behave itself unseemly. That means to be unbecoming. A lot of Christians, or call themselves Christians, are this way.

Another way of saying it is they're rude and obnoxious. If you let the love of God work through you, the fruit of the Spirit love work through you, you won't be rude and obnoxious to people. That's acting unseemly, acting rude.

Instead, for you men, it means to act seemly would be to be a gentleman. My mom always taught me, you need to be a gentleman. For the women, you need to be a lady and act that way.

Not be rude, not be obnoxious, not, you know, can I be real honest with you? When somebody is rude and obnoxious to me, the fact that I should be patient for them is really trite. You know what I mean? But we have to have that love because there are people like that. So when it comes to be rude and obnoxious, are you a 1 or a 10? Seeks not her own.

Love seeks not her own. This means that I'll love you if you love me back. I'll be nice to you if you're nice back to me.

I'll help you out if it helps me. That's seeking your own. In other words, only doing

something for what you can get in return.

Love doesn't do that. When Jesus Christ died on the cross and shed his blood, what did he get in return for doing all that to us? There is nothing we can give him that would match what he did for us except have faith that he did it for us and then try to love him back. Love doesn't seek their own.

Doesn't try to only do things for what you can get out of it. I know you all like my substories. Here's a good substory.

My first submarine. In order to get your dolphins to qualify as a submariner, we had these sheets and there was all the systems, all the mechanics, everything on board, damage control and all this. And you had to learn it and then go to somebody who was qualified.

They would ask you the questions and then sign it off. And when your sheet was signed, you went to a qualification board. About three or four people would sit there and ask you questions.

If you do, then you would qualify. We had just one guy. Nicest guy.

Always talked to you. Always, always, you know, see if you need a help. And then one day he qualified.

Later that day, I saw him. Hey, dude, how's it going? He ignored me. And I'm like, hey, wait, what's wrong? Why aren't you nice? What, is there something wrong? He goes, I don't have to be nice anymore.

I'm qualified. You see, everything he did was for his own benefit. That's what love doesn't do.

Love doesn't seek their own, what's beneficial for them. Love loves. Notice, it's not easily provoked.

That means it doesn't get angry easily. We had a guy on one, I've known guys before, we call them instant. They would get mad that quick.

They get angry like at the drop of a hat. Well, if you're a child of God and you let love work through you, that's not you. At least it shouldn't be.

There's no place for anger in a child of God. God wants us to know that love is not easily provoked, all right? It doesn't say not provoked at all. Jesus Christ, remember when he overturned the money changer's table? He'd put up with enough and he had to do something to get their attention.

But what not easily provoked means is you take a while for your anger. Or if you want to

make it sound better, for your righteous anger to work and other things, not easily provoked. God doesn't want his children to be angry.

Doesn't matter if you're a mother or father, be angry with your kids or be angry with your co-workers, be angry with the person across the street, be angry with whoever, anger gets us nowhere. My dad, when he was teaching me about fighting, he used to tell me, the first person to get angry is the one who's gonna lose. Cuz once you get angry, you stop thinking and you just react.

But love, love isn't easily provoked, doesn't easily get angry. Notice also, it says it's not, it thinks no evil. All right, brother here, he does something against me.

That could be anything, but one of you guys. Now, from that point on, my only thought is, how am I gonna get even with them? How am I gonna get back at them? Not just get even, I'm gonna get ahead. That's thinks no evil, love doesn't do that.

Love doesn't look for opportunities to get back at somebody for what they did to you. All right, when it says thinks no evil, then you look at people as people the way God looks at people. You don't look at them as they did me wrong, I ain't get them back.

And you start thinking all these evil ways, love doesn't do that. So when it comes to thinking no evil, where are you at, one or a ten? Rejoice is not an iniquity, that means you're not happy with sin. Either in your life or the life of others.

It's amazing how many Christians look at images that lead to sin on computer or whatever. That watch TV shows, attend events that promote sin. I'll tell you, one of the saddest days was when Hallmark Channel started promoting homosexuality.

It's like, they were always so good. And I'll be honest, if we start watching one and it gets to that, I'd change the channel, but they love each other. No, that's not this kind of love that God's talking about.

You can, and I know this is a little sidestep here, but you can love somebody without having sex with them. The love is not the sin, it's when you go too far. Back to this, rejoice is not an iniquity.

Love doesn't get happy when other people sin. Whether it's sin to their demise or whatever the reason, you don't rejoice in that. Rejoice, but rejoice is in the truth.

Now remember, we're talking mainly about people. You rejoice when people are living the truth, the truth of the word of God. When you see somebody standing up for the rights of others, because that's what God wants.

When you see somebody proclaiming the love of God to somebody so that their soul can be saved, and you evangelize. When you see a brother or sister falling away from God,

and you go to them and say, thus saith the Lord, what you're doing is wrong. You need to get back, you need to repent and get back to God.

And you hear somebody that that's happened to, you should be going, whoo, praise God for that. Rejoice in the truth, bears all things. That means it's an interesting word.

That word beareth means to cover and protect. So if somebody is treating you badly, love will cover you, and try to protect you from those insults, from those wrongdoings, from those lies that people may be telling you about you. Love will do that, because that's what it does.

It bears or it holds up you in the midst of whatever turmoil you may be going through. Love believes all things. This is a hard one.

We live in a sarcastic world. We live in a world where you can't trust anybody. But love, you give people a chance.

Somebody tells me something, I'll tell them. They'll go, do you believe me? Tell them proven otherwise, I believe you. Sometimes, some of us, they'll go, no matter what somebody tells you, you're not gonna believe them no matter what.

But love believes all things. Love gives people a chance to prove themselves right. Love also endures all things.

The love of God is what helps you put up with some of the things that goes on in this world, but we're living with a bunch of sinners, amen? And we are too sometimes, but love will endure. Love will believe. Love will bear.

You allow the love to work through you to do that. In verse eight, just the first part. Love, charity, never fails.

You're saying, well, why don't I feel the love in my life? Why can't I do that? Love never failed, you did. You failed in allowing God to work in your life. You put up that umbrella to keep it away.

You've allowed yourself for some of these things that says, this is what love is, you've allowed yourself to do the other anyway. Love doesn't envy, but you've allowed yourself to envy. Love bears up things, but you've allowed yourself to try to handle it yourself.

Love thinks no evil, but you wanna get back at that person who did something bad to you. See, that's us putting umbrellas up to keep love, God's love from working through us and others. Can you imagine if everyone who called themselves a child of God would live according to this list? At first they did, and they turned the world upside down.

That's what God wants. But as we went through these, ask yourself, for each of these, am I a one, or at it, or I'm a ten? That's my life. Remember, love isn't just action.

Love has to be who you are, because that will make you Christ-like. I'm gonna read this one more time, and then we're gonna have a prayer. But this time, because these describe Jesus Christ.

Remember, God is love. Christ is God. So I'm gonna reread this, but instead of charity, I'm gonna say Christ.

And you'll see that Christ's life matched this. And when we can match these, we'll be Christ-like ourselves. We're gonna start in verse four.

Christ suffered long and is kind. Christ envied not. Christ bonnet not himself, is not puffed up.

Did not behave himself unseemly. Sought not his own, was not easily provoked, thought no evil. Rejoiced not in iniquity, and rejoiced in the truth.

Christ bore all things, Christ believed all things, hoped all things, endured all things. Christ never fails, and that's what he wants us to be. Think about your list that you had in your head.

Which ones you need to work on? Which ones you need to allow that love to overcome your natural reaction to do the wrong thing? Cuz then we'll all be Christ-like. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you, Lord, for your word.

We thank you for what you've taught us about love and how we need to be love for this world. To allow your love to work through us. Allow your love to make everything that we do to match what you would do.

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