

PAUL'S HYMN OF LOVE I CORINTHIANS 13:6-7

The apostle Paul wrote to a city church that mirrored the very culture we live in. Let's take a trip to Corinth Century one and stop in RI of 1993...

If we were to scan this epistle in a couple of minutes and grab the big problems they faced in century one Christianity, these would be the "sins of the saints at Corinth":

1. DIVISIVENESS 1:10 divisiveness=following men and movements more than truth.
2. ARROGANCE 1:18-20 arrogance=hung up on high brow human philosophy rather than the simple gospel,
3. WORLDLY 1:26 worldly=pursuing cultural, societal worldly fame and prestige. Temporal over eternal.
4. FLESHLY 3:1-3 fleshly=carnality, the entertainment mentality of the Christian life.
5. MORALLY LAX 5:1 morally lax=toleration of sexual promiscuity, especially seen in the list of 6:9-11.
6. LITIGIOUS 6:1 litigious=a vengeful, get even, get all I can, my rights first attitude toward one another.
7. CONFUSED 7: confused=they had a low view of marriage, thus confusion over God's principles for a biblical marriage.
8. SELFISH 8:1 selfish=liberty misused by a selfish lack of love and care for others.
9. UNDISCIPLINED 9:24 undisciplined=needed strict self-denial into holiness.
10. LUSTFUL 10:6 lustful=chasing after worldly things and pleasures.
11. COMPROMISERS 10:16-22 compromisers = lit. Facing both ways' as they came to the Lord's table and also to

pagan idol worship.

12. UNSUBMISSIVE 11:1 unsubmitiveness=perversion of male/female roles in church, home and society.
13. HOLLOW 12-14 hollow=they had perverted the proper use of spiritual gifts,
14. ERRANT 15:1,12 errant=they had lost their grip on God's truth.

Turn with me to I Corinthians 13 and let's read verses 1-8a

Now, let's focus on the solution Paul presented them. In essence it was this- Christ in you is.

1. "patient (makrothumeia) = this is patience not merely with circumstances, but with people. When you have the power to avenge and don't do it. Literally long tempered. The ability to be wronged over and over again. See Paul in I Corinthians 6:6; every Christian in Ephesians 4:2 and the Spirit's fruit in Galatians 5:22. Those who can see further than the present.
2. "kind (cresteuetai)" = the other side of patience is here taking any grief, giving anything to be helpful and useful, healing wounds.
3. "not jealous (zeloi)" = never envious. The root word here is 'ro boil, seethe'. This is not the mere I want what you have, it's the malignant I don't want you to have and keep what I can't have.
4. "does not brag (perpereuetai)" = is not boastful, the verbalizing of self. The root is the word for which we get windbag.
5. "not arrogant (prusioutai)" = not conceited. The attitude of pride. I am better & etc. It is when one becomes inflated with their own importance.
6. "not act unbecomingly (aschemonei)" = not rude. is better.

Seen as 'love does not behave gracelessly'. The greek words for grace and charm are notably the same. As swindoll put it, in Christ. We become winsome.

7. not seek its own "or isn't insistent upon its rights=but took upon himself the form of a servant.
8. "not provoked (paroxunetai)" = never flies into a rage. This is the lack of becoming exasperated. As Kipling said, master this and you have it all. Better yet Solomon in Proverbs 25:28 "he that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city without walls and broken down." Two kinds of people, those who think of their rights and those thinking of their duties. Our mind set must be selfish or selfless...
9. "does not take into account a wrong suffered (logize- = to remembers no evil. This is refusing to store up the memory of any wrong received. What a liberating truth to grasp ahold of. Like an accountant, clear the ledger.. As Chrysostom said, "love is like a spark falling into the ocean is quenched". As God does not hold our sins against us in Romans 4:8, Psalm 32.
10. "does not rejoice in unrighteousness = no pleasure in evil reports as do the heathen in Romans 1:32.
11. "rejoices with the truth (sugchairei)" = in harmony with the truth, partaking of the love of the truth 11 Thessalonians 2: 10, @ch is the joy of God. As Psalm 15 says 'speaks truth in heart.
12. "bears all things (stegai)" = literally to cover on all sides, to cover in silence. Ties word originally spoke of a watertight boat. As in 1 Peter 4:8. Endures it all
13. "believes all things (pisteuei)" = not suspicious, but trusting God's plan knows that nothing happens by chance. Thus is completely trusting
14. "hopes all things (elpizei)" = even @ repeated disappointments there is a constant assurance that God has a future and is working all things for his own glory. Thus, never ceasing to

hope

15. "endures all things (hupomenai)" = bearing everything with triumphant endurance

Well, what is love? Love is Christ. And, Christ in you is patient, kind

Introduction:

Our Lord Jesus said in John 13:35 "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (NKJV). By what? By love.

We must take Christ and His love, into our church, into our homes and into our neighborhoods. In essence, into every relationship of life. This is only possible as He who is love is shed abroad in our hearts. This is not a passive resignation. It must be an active participation on our part.

Have you read the newspaper recently? I'm sure no one has missed the morbid and devastating tale of Susan Smith, the young mother who in great despair murdered her own two precious sons by driving them into a lake while they fought helplessly for freedom and for life.

That is the antithesis of love. On the opposite end of the spectrum is the following incident:

The story is told of a woman who loved her only child very much. Living in the Scottish Highlands, she was traveling from one location to another by foot, when suddenly caught in a blinding snowstorm in the peaks of those mountains. Realizing she could not see to travel any farther and feeling the cold body of her precious

baby, she clothed that child with her own shed garments and hid the child in the shelter of a large rock. She clothed her child with love -- literally. For in the clear dawn light, the woman was found naked and lifeless by her precious child who was warm and still alive. This was love that not only lived for others but died for another.

The beauty and wonder of love is like the wonder of the sunset. Whoever questioned the beauty of the sunset? But who can define it? The astronomer can give us the mathematics of it, but there is no sunset glory in the mathematics. Here, beauty defined is beauty destroyed. As we look at the Word of God today, let us gain a fuller understanding of the beauty of this love.

Three things we see about love:

1. LOVE IS DECISIVE

There are three words in the Greek language which are translated "love."

- One, EROS, tells of love of passion, of lust, of sensual desire. This word occurs in the OT. In Esther, Ezekiel, Hosea and in Proverbs, but never in the NT.
- The second of these words, PHILEO, tells of the love of impulse, of affection, of natural inclination. We find it in such words as "philosophy" and "Philadelphia." It occurs in both New and Old testaments, and speaks chiefly of our love for one another, of affection among relations and friends.
- But the third word, AGAPE, is the word that is used in chapter. 13 and so often in the

NT is expressive of "character determined by will, and not of spontaneous natural emotion." It denotes love which chooses its object with decision of will, so that it becomes self-denying, Christianity took up this word and distinguished it from all that is lustful or merely emotional. This love is absolutely unstained by any evil association. So the first thing to understand is the DECISIVE quality of this love. Note John's description of this love in *1 John 3:1 Behold what manner [literally where did it come from? Its not from Earth!] of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. (NKJV)*

2. LOVE IS DIVINE

This third kind of love describes the moral attribute of God Himself: "God is Love." Therefore when we sing George Matheson's hymn:

"O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee!"

we are not singing about an abstract love, but worshipping God Who not only does love, BUT IS LOVE, WHOSE CHARACTER IS HOLY LOVE. In the Word of God we learn this love is discoverable essentially only IN God, displayed perfectly only BY God and is derived only FROM God. And knowing that this love is spiritual and divine, we understand that. This the kind of love described in *1 John 4:7-10 Beloved, let us love one another,*

for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 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. (NKJV)

3. LOVE IS INDESTRUCTIBLE.

Here Paul tells us that while other things pass away, love lasts, it never fails. It is not dependent upon, nor is it affected by anything outside of itself. It is content to bestow itself upon the worthy and unworthy alike. In our hearts it moves upward to God and outward to men. In chapter 13 we learn about how this love moves outward to man. Paul says in *1 Corinthians 13:13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these [is] love. (NKJV)*

So this morning we are studying the Love of Christ, love that is decisive, divine and indestructible. It is the love we must take into our churches, our homes and into our neighborhoods. This is only possible as He who is love is shed abroad in our hearts.

As we look at God's Word together we will divide our study into three perspectives on this AGAPE LOVE:

1. LOVE LACKING IN CORINTH
2. LOVE LOOKING LIKE CHRIST
3. LOVE LEARNED IN THE CHURCH

I. LOVE LACKING IN CORINTH --

First, let's journey back to the City of Corinth for a quick visit.

A. THE SETTING OF CORINTH

1. The City

Sprawling along the thin isthmus joining the two halves of Ancient Greece was 1st Century Corinth. With the azure green waters and pure white sands of the Aegean Sea on both sides, it was a bustling commercial center in Greece. World Famous for its sporting centers and Pan-Ionian Games, the entire city was built around the acro-corinthus. Atop this flat-topped, two thousand foot high mountain, was the Temple to Aphrodite, goddess of LUST. Her word was EROS, sensual love. All day long worshippers ascended to offer their bodies to her in the dark rooms of her one thousand shrine prostitutes, both male and female. And as the setting sun swept her shores, those prostitutes made their way down the mountain to earn their living.

This city afforded too many temptations for the fun loving Corinthian Christians. The Apostle Paul had seen many wondrous conversions. He wrote to them, calling them saints, for so they were in Christ. But, with lax spiritual discipline they were easy prey for the evils they faced.

2. The Chapter

Chapters 12, 13 and 14 of Paul's Epistle deals with Spiritual Gifts. chapter. 12 tells of the rich endowment of the gifts. Chapter. 13 tells of their vital energy and chapter. 14 tells of their worthy exercise. Between the endowment and the exercise is this beautiful chapter revealing that

love alone can safeguard the use of the gifts which are bestowed by God alone. The Church at Corinth “came behind in no gift”, but it was sadly lacking in love. But the Spirit of God here declares that if one has not love, he has nothing; and that if one has love, whatever else he may lack, he has what matters most.

If we were to scan this epistle in a couple of minutes and grab the big problems they faced in Century One Christianity, these would be the “Sins of the Saints of Corinth.”

B. THE SINS OF THE SAINTS OF CORINTH

OVERHEAD # 1

1. IN First Corinthians 1:10 we find DIVISIVE: They were following men and their movements more than God and His truth.
2. In First Corinthians 1:18-20 we find their ARROGANT: they were hung up on high brow human philosophy rather than the simple gospel.
3. First Corinthians 1:26 WORLDLY: Pursuing cultural, societal worldly fame and prestige. temporal over eternal.
4. In First Corinthians 3:1-3 we see their FLESHLY: they had developed a carnality, which reduces the serious holiness of the Christian life to the mere entertainment mentality of the Christian life.
5. In First Corinthians 5:1 we find they had sunken into utter MORALLY LAX: they had developed an ungodly toleration of sexual promiscuity, especially seen in the list of I Corinthians 6:9-11.
6. In First Corinthians 6:1 we find they were LITIGIOUS:

they had caught a Vengeful, Get Even, Get All I Can, My Rights First - Attitude Toward One Another.

7. In First Corinthians 7 we find they were CONFUSED: They had a low view of marriage, thus there was confusion over God’s principles for a Biblical marriage.
8. In First Corinthians 8:1 they were SELFISH: their liberty in Christ was being misused by a selfish lack of love and care for others.
9. In First Corinthians 9:24 we see that they were UNDISCIPLINED: they desperately needed to learn that God commands strict self-denial unto holiness.
10. In First Corinthians 10:6 we find they were LUSTFUL: they were chasing after worldly things and worldly pleasures.
11. In First Corinthians 10:16-22 we find they were COMPROMISING: as John Bunyan said in his Pilgrims Progress, they were “Mr. Facing Both Ways” because they came to the Lord’s table and also to pagan idol worship.
12. In First Corinthians 11:1 we see a UNSUBMISSIVE: Perversion of male/female roles in church, home and society.
13. First Corinthians 12-14 SPIRITUALLY EMPTY: They had perverted the proper use of spiritual gifts.
14. First Corinthians 15:1, 12 DOCTRINALLY ERRANT: They had lost their grip on resurrection truth.

Now look at the spiritual gifts present in Corinth

OVERHEAD #2

Spiritual Gifts With and Without Christ
(of the 19 gifts they had 13)

Apostleship (1 Cor. 12:28)

Prophecy (1 Cor. 12:10; 14:1-40)
Miracles (1 Cor. 12:9,28,30)
Tongues (1 Cor. 12:10)
Ministering (1 Cor. 12:28)
Teaching (1 Cor. 12:28)
Faith (1 Cor. 12:8-10)
Discerning Spirits (1 Cor. 12:10)
Administration (1 Cor. 12:28)
The Word of Knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8b)
The Word of Wisdom (1 Cor. 12:8a)
Leadership (1 Cor. 12:28)
Serving (1 Cor. 12:28)

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In v. 1-3 is a description of Gifts without Love and in vv. 4-7 is a description of Love without Gifts. The Corinthians had a number of great qualities: eloquence, inspiration, insight, knowledge, faith, service and sacrifice, and these all being possessed in full measure. The Corinthians came behind in no gift. Scroggie says these gifts are like big zeros alone but had they the digit "love" in front, they would represent ten million in value.

OVERHEAD #3

LOVE +
 LOVE +
 LOVE +

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With Christ's Love - it all becomes worthwhile!

Without love, all the Corinthian's abilities and great giftedness led only to sin.

(If these Christians were to squeeze the handle on one of those "Measure your love life gizmos at the fair, their love wouldn't even register. How would your "love life" register if we were to examine it today?

Without Christ and His love at the heart of all we do it is meaningless. Without Christ and His love at the heart of all that we say it is empty. We've seen LOVE LACKING IN CORINTH. Now look with me at LOVE LOOKING LIKE CHRIST in the thirteenth chapter. Paul is addressing the need to see the way God intended for them to conduct their lives when he breaks into this BEAUTIFUL HYMN OF LOVE.

II. LOVE LOOKING LIKE CHRIST

TURN WITH ME TO I CORINTHIANS 13 AND LET'S READ VERSES 1-7

The picture of love is not the dream of an artist, it is the work of a photographer and Christ is the original. He was and is incarnate Love. To love like this is to be like Christ and the degree of our failure is the measure of our unlikeness to Him.

In His presence there is fullness of joy. It is only as we spend time in His presence that we can become more like Him. And truly as we make choices to obey His word, there is great joy which will be ours!. A Christian is described as one who sins less and less and obeys the WORD OF GOD more and more. Only as we abide in Him -- meeting with Him in reading and meditating upon the WORD OF GOD as we hide His Word in our hearts -- and being in continually in prayer (Prayer ought to

be as natural as breathing) that we become more and more like Christ. There is no instant way to become a mature Christian woman. We are conditioned by the “instant” nature of the world we live in -- instant potatoes, instant photos, Quik Trips, etc. that we somehow believe that there ought be a way for “instant maturity in Christ”. There isn’t. We must be faithfully seeking to spend time with God every day when we desire to learn from Him as we sit at His feet.

Now let’s review what Jan and Carma have taught us in our two previous lessons on this chapter.

OVERHEAD #4

1. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...PATIENT - (MAKROTHUMEIN)
This is patience not merely with circumstances, but with people. When you have the power to avenge and don’t do it. Literally long-tempered. The ability to be wronged over and over again. See Paul in II Corinthians 6:6; every Christian in Ephesians 4:2 and the Spirit’s fruit in Galatians 5:22. Those who can see further than the present.
2. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...KIND - (CHESTEUETAI)
The other side of patience is here taking any grief, giving anything to be helpful and useful, healing wounds.
3. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT JEALOUS - (ZELOI)
Never envious. The root word here is “to boil, seethe”. This is not the mere I want what you have; it’s the malignant I don’t want you to have and keep what I can’t have.
4. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT BRAGGING - (PERPEREUETAI)
Is not boastful, the verbalizing of self, the root is the word for which we get windbag.

5. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT ARROGANT - (PHUSIOUTAI)

Not conceited. The attitude of pride. I am better, etc. It is when one becomes inflated with their own importance.

6. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT ACTING UNBECOMINGLY - (ASCHEMONEI)

Not rude is better seen as “love does not behave gracelessly.” The Greek words for grace and charm are notably the same. As Swindoll put it, in Christ we become winsome.

7. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT SEEKING IT’S OWN - Or isn’t insistent upon it’s rights - but took upon Himself the form of a servant.

8. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT PROVOKED - (PAROXUNETAI)

Never flies into a rage. This is the lack of becoming exasperated. As Kipling said, “Master this and you have it all.” Better yet Solomon in Proverbs 25:28, “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city without walls and broken down.” Two kinds of people, those who think of their rights and those thinking of their duties. Our mind set must be selfish or selfless...

9. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT A WRONG SUFFERED - (LOGIZOMAI)

To remember no evil. This is refusing to store up the memory of any wrong received. What a liberating truth to grasp hold of like an accountant, clear the ledger. As Chrysostom said, “Love is like a spark falling into the ocean is quenched.” As God does not hold our sins against us in Romans 4:8, Psalm 32.

Let's look now at our new verses for today, I Corinthians 13:6 and 7. We will find the last six characteristics of Christ's Love:

Overhead #8

I CORINTHIANS 13:7-8

CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT REJOICING IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...REJOICING WITH THE TRUTH - (SUGCHAIREI)

CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...BEARING ALL THINGS - (STEGAI)

CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...BELIEVING ALL THINGS - (PISTEUEI)

CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...HOPING ALL THINGS - (ELPIZEI)

CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...ENDURING ALL THINGS - (HUPOMENAI)

10. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...NOT REJOICING IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS - Love takes no pleasure in evil reports as do the heathen in Romans 1:32. The meaning of iniquity is "unrighteousness". Unrighteousness talks about sin. Love never rejoices in sin.

1. REJOICING IN SIN - WHOSE SIN?

A. Love does not rejoice in its OWN SIN.

Have you ever heard someone brag about his

own sin? "You know what I did? I did this and this..." But Christians would never do that, would they? The Corinthians did! Read I Corinthians 5:1-6. Incest was being committed in their midst and they were proud of it. According to v.2, they were boasting about it.

Are there consequences of sin? Of course!

B. Love does not rejoice in OTHER'S SIN

Just pick up a magazine, visit the bookstore, or watch an hour of T.V. to find out how much our society rejoices in the sin of others. Sin is not only enjoyed; it is flaunted; it has become our entertainment! LOOK AT THE HEADLINES ON THESE MAGAZINES...

2. REJOICING IN SIN - WHY NOT?

- a. Sin Offends God. David in Psalm 69:9b says, "... the reproaches of those who reproached Thee are fallen upon me." Sin is so offensive to the holiness and purity of God that if you really love God, there is certainly no place for rejoicing in the sin.
- b. Sin Affects Sinners. In the same way that sin grieves the heart that loves God, it grieves the heart that loves the sinner --thinking of how that sinner will suffer chastening and judgment. See 2 Thessalonians 3:5, 6, 14-15.

How does sin affect man? Sin affect man both SPIRITUALLY AND PHYSICALLY.

SPIRITUALLY, sin has a great affect on the soul of a man or woman. It affects our relationship with God. Unconfessed sin in our lives causes us to forfeit blessing, takes us out of the place of being blessed by God and puts you in a place where there is no joy. There is a soul sickness when a believer is sinful.

PHYSICALLY sin will have results of pain and illness. See David in 2 Samuel 12 (p. 93) David is a vivid example of the tremendous physical impact sin can have. Emotional anxiety or trauma can create impulses that can cause any number of physiological problems.

PHYSICIANS report that physiological problems due to emotional anxiety are created along three lines:

- a. The emotional center in the brain causes a change in the amount of blood flow to a given organ. This can become debilitating to that organ.
- b. Emotional trauma can create an effect on the secretion of certain glands, which also can affect bodily function.
- c. Emotional trauma can also affect the change in tension of certain muscles.

God wants Christians to be happy and healthy in their souls. God wants you to know how it is to be

blessed. He doesn't want you to feel His chastening, or experience physical illness that comes from the trauma of willful sin. The real key to all of it is to learn to love. This is the indispensable reality for the Christian. God is love; so if God is to be seen in us, it is going to be when we express His love.

I'LL BET YOU ARE THINKING, THAT'S GREAT BUT WHEN IS SHE GOING TO GET TO SOMETHING THAT RELATES TO ME? Let's just stop for a moment and address one way we probably ALL have rejoiced in the sin of others.:

3. REJOICING IN SIN - THE TONGUE THAT SINS

RECOGNIZE IT AS GOSSIP:

I Corinthians. 13:6a also addresses the issue of GOSSIP, because love doesn't even recount evil things. Have you ever wondered how much of our conversation would be silenced if we never gossiped about the faults and sin of others. If we didn't read the paper about all the evil that is happening around the world and if we didn't talk about the failures, faults and sins of the people around us, what would we talk about? This passage, next to James 3 is probably the most stringent indictment in the NT against gossiping. Love rejoiceth not in iniquity. And if it doesn't rejoice in it, it isn't happy to hear it or to pass it on.

"Gossip is vice enjoyed vicariously." But love doesn't do that. Love hates the sin, the way it

hurts God, and the way it hurts the sinner. Jim Berg, a long time Christian counselor says, "If you are not a part of the solution or the problem, then you shouldn't be talking about it."

OVERHEAD #5

REPLACE THE GOSSIP WITH GOODNESS:

SILENCE - YELLOW OR GOLDEN?

Granville Walker said, "There are times when silence is yellow.... times when we ought to stand on our feet, and regardless of the consequences, challenge the gross evils of the time; and times when not to do so is the most blatant form of cowardice. BUT there are other times when silence is GOLDEN, when to tell the truth is to make many hearts bleed needlessly and when nothing is accomplished and everything is hurt by a loose tongue."

Love never rejoices in iniquity. It never rejoices in what offends God or in what harms the sinner. Therefore, it never likes to hear it or pass it on.

PLUS OR MINUS PEOPLE?

Instead of parading somebody's evil, love finds the good in people and talks about that. Don't you love to be around people like this? This is a PLUS person. A MINUS person is somebody who goes around subtracting from people's reputations. I want to be a plus person. I want to add to people instead of subtracting from them. *Colossians 4:6 [Let] your speech always [be] with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. (NKJV)*

But what if there is not something good? There is always something good!

- Jesus saw potential in Peter! Most of us would have fired Peter at the beginning of his ministry, but Jesus didn't.
- Jesus could see a plus in the life of a harlot who washed His feet with penitent tears; the Pharisee could see nothing but a minus.
- Jesus could see a plus in a half-breed Samaritan.
- Jesus was a plus person. He added to people. He didn't subtract from people. Love is a plus -- it is positive. It encourages goodness, finds the best in a person and then exalts it. If you have children, I hope you teach them to be a plus person.

LOVE DOES NOT REJOICE IN INIQUITY. Next we see...

12. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...REJOICING WITH THE TRUTH - (SUGCHAIREI) In harmony with the truth, partaking of the love of the truth. 2 Thessalonians 2:10 which is the joy of God. As Psalm 15 says, "speaks truth in heart." Holiness or righteousness is based on truth. In John 14:6 Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life. One cannot be righteous until he behaves himself in accord with God's truth.

Love does not rejoice with error or false teaching. Love cannot tolerate wrong doctrine. Love will rejoice when

truth is taught and when truth is lived.

2 John v. 6 *"This is the commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."* Love is obedience and living in the truth.

Dr. Moffatt translates this, "Love is never glad when others go wrong: love is gladdened by goodness." Love does not delight in exposing the weakness of others. *1 Corinthians 13:6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; (NKJV)*. Nevertheless, love is opposed to sin, grieves and weeps over it. It is the ally of the truth, and in sheltering the sinner it will never fail to condemn his sin.

REDPATH: How the Lord Jesus yearned over sinners. As recorded in John 8, the woman taken in adultery. *John 8:10-11 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." (NKJV)* He did not condone her sin, but He protected and forgave her, the sinner. HERE AT THE CROSS, MERCY AND TRUTH MEET. There Jesus condemned sin but pardoned the sinner.

SUMMARY: Love is so zealous for the holiness of God and the health of a person that it never rejoices in unrighteousness and it knows that since the standard of joy is always the truth, it rejoices when the truth is taught and lived. Love is not for the halfhearted -- to live by love is one of the most difficult things there is. It takes the most strength, the most discipline, the most commitment and the most faith of anything in the Bible. But without it

we're nothing!

LOVE REJOICES IN THE TRUTH. And because of this we see the next four qualities of love which flow in an ascending order, building upon each other like a musical piece growing to a crescendo!

13. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...BEARING ALL THINGS - (STEGAI) Literally to cover on all sides, to cover in silence.

DEFINED: When Paul says, "love beareth all things" he is not talking about enduring a trial, he is talking about covering the ugliness in someone else's life. Love out of respect and honest concern for the real value of another person will do everything it can to cover up the sin of that person.

Scroggie: Love is strong in its silences. It patiently endures what it has to suffer. It is not shaken by any sort of ingratitude. The word used here is highly pictorial. It is employed of holding fast, like a watertight vessel (I Peter 4:8); it is used of a roof which does not leak; it is used of troops defending a fortress, and it is used of ice bearing weight, and not giving way. It bravely stands up to life.

NATURAL RESPONSE: It is normal for depravity to uncover everybody's evil. Look at your own children. One of the first things we see revealing their sinfulness is the eagerness to tattle on their brothers and sisters.. Some people never grow out of this. They spend their life tattling on others -- in marriages --talking about the errors and faults of their partner.

SPIRITUAL RESPONSE: I Peter 4:8 B "...FOR LOVE SHALL COVER THE MULTITUDE OF SINS" Love is a big blanket that runs around throwing itself over people's faults ... not exposing them. Proverbs 10:12 *"Hatred stirreth up strifes, but love covereth all sins.* Have you ever noticed how easy it is to dismiss the faults of those you love. Your best friend does something wrong and you say, "That's okay. Everybody makes a mistake." But what about when the woman or that church leader you don't like does something wrong? You love it, don't you? Why? Because you want them to do something wrong and look bad. But love dismisses the sins of the one it loves.

God so loved, that He,; I John. 4:10 B *"sent His Son to be the propitiation (covering) for our sins."*

Now love will warn, exhort and rebuke and discipline; but love will also cover that sin, not expose it. LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS.

13. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...BELIEVING ALL THINGS - (PISTEUEI) Not suspicious, but trusting God's plan. Thus is completely trusting. Love believes the best about others.. Love sees the weakness, throws a mantle of silence over it, and then believes the best.

Scroggie: This confident love is entirely alien to the spirit of the cynic, the pessimist, the anonymous slanderer, the secret detractor. Love takes the best and kindest view of all men, in all circumstances, as long as it is possible to do so.

OVERHEAD # 6

Thomas Carlyle pleaded eloquently for a tempered judgment of Robert Burns. :

"Granted the ship comes into harbor with shrouds and tackle damaged; the pilot is blameworthy; he has not been all wise and all powerful; but to know how blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the Globe, or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs."

(are you guilty of judging another when you don't know "where he has been" -- in the church so often the leaders deal with people -- after much prayer, counseling and seeking of the Lord -- then they meet with cruel judgment of members of the congregation who have judged without knowing the extent of the circumstances (because they are often not best to be shared with all people)

REDPATH: When a man has fallen, love will think about the battle that he must have fought and the struggle that he must have had before he went down.

The Lord Jesus never misjudged anybody, because He did not judge by outward appearances. *John 5:6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time [in that case], he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? (KJV)* He asked the worst case at the pool of Bethesda. He became the Friend of sinners. Remember God sees beyond the mere exterior of a person *1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For [the] [Lord does] not [see] as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."* (NKJV)

This aspect of love is often seen in the hearts of parents of an UNBELIEVING CHILD. He may be a source of great heartbreak. Even though they recognize his sins, faults and problems. They throw a mantle of love over him. They believe with all their hearts he will come back to the Lord. Why? Because they love him and love has to believe that. Love cares too much not to believe it.

Others believe the best about an UNBELIEVING SPOUSE .

Jesus believed the best about HIS DISCIPLES. Peter was notorious for his faithlessness, continually falling on his face. James and John had a problem with pride. They had the nerve to ask their mother to ask Jesus if they could have the chief seats in the Kingdom. Jesus could have said, "Father, I don't know what to tell You, but I don't think your plan is going to work out -- These disciples are a bunch of losers. " But Jesus knew the sins of the disciples and yet believed the best about every one of them. He gave them the task and sent them into the world saying, "you can do it!"

If you are going to make a mistake about someone's character, err on the side of love. Make a mistake in trusting or believing them too much.

The Corinthians were evidently believing the worst -- they were suspecting and assumed that nobody ever told the truth. In Matthew 9 (v. 2b, 7, 3) we see the Pharisees felt this way about Jesus. They had a predisposition that Christ was evil; so whatever Jesus did had to be evil. They were cynical and suspicious. Once you start hating

someone, you will try to find faults. On the contrary, once you start loving somebody, you will start covering their faults.

Love is a harbor of trust for those who are doubted by everybody else. And as soon as somebody wants to get things right again, love is quick to restore the fallen brother (Gal. 6:1)

LOVE BELIEVES ALL THINGS.

14. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...HOPING ALL THINGS - (ELPIZEI) Even amid repeated disappointments there is a constant assurance that God has a future and is working all things for His own glory.

Hope knows that God is seeking man and that man is made for God and so love never despairs of anybody.
Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. (KJV)

When you run out of faith, hang on to hope. Hope is the long line, the long cord, that never gets disconnected. As long as the grace of God is operative, human failure is never final. Is anything too hard for God? Pray and keep hoping.

This rope of hope is optimistic -- God is still God and He can do it. Love refuses to take failure as final. Jesus wouldn't accept it from Peter, Paul wouldn't accept it from the Corinthians. Many a loving wife has held on to a husband; many a loving parent has held on to a wayward child and many a loving friend has held on to a fallen brother -- just holding on to hope.

Hope does not try to persuade itself that the thief is honest; but it holds tight knowing that man was MADE for honesty, for purity and the heavenly vision.

REDPATH: Christ, because He is love, never gives in to dismay or gives up to despair. I am so glad I have a God like that, for when others give us up it is wonderful to know there is a God in heaven who goes on hoping and planning for our good.

LOVE HOPES ALL THINGS.

If you bear all things, you believe all things and you hope all things, but the rope keeps getting thinner and thinner so that you feel that you are losing hope, then ...

15. CHRIST IN YOU WILL BE ...ENDURING ALL THINGS - (HUPOMENAI) Bearing everything with triumphant endurance. Love never fails. Love never dies; it doesn't end. Love cannot be conquered.

This love took Jesus to Calvary. 1 John 3:16 *By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down [our] lives for the brethren.* (NKJV)

The Greek term translated "endureth" is a military term which has to do with being positioned in the middle of a violent battle. The emphasis is not on handling little, minor annoyances. It refers to love that stands wounded and bleeding against incredible opposition and still loves.

When the Apostle Stephen was lying on the ground with his life being crushed out with rocks, the Scripture

records for us in Acts 7:60b, "*Lord, lay not this sin to their charge...*" Even in death he wanted to throw a mantle over the sins of his people. He believed, he hoped and he preached with the belief that some would listen and come to Christ. When he ran out of faith and hope, all he had left was endurance. Because he loved them.

The LORD JESUS on the cross threw a mantle over His crucifiers' sin, believed that some would believe, hoped and endured in the end. Luke 23:34a: "Father, forgive them..."

Isaiah 53:4a, 5a Love will bear the pain and the punishment.

Love never dies. You can't kill it. It never fails. Even when love for a wayward child continues year after year. When you get back hatred and bitterness and rejection, you never stop loving... you endure.

Paul said *2 Corinthians 12:15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.* (KJV)

Love bears all hurts, wounds, sins and disappointments; covers them with a blanket of silence and feels sympathetic, redemptive and even bears the pain. Love believes the best about people, is never cynical, is never suspicious -- in spite of the way it is being wounded. And when love's believing is betrayed, love turns to hope because God is still God and He can do anything. And even when hope grows thin and all hope seems lost, love endures. It endures deep hurt that seems so final, never losing the triumphant confidence that God who gives His

children peace is still on the throne. Love cares too much to give up.

SCROGGIE: Look at these four things. Love BEARS, silently suffers and actively hopes, and it does so because it BELIEVES, putting the best construction upon the conduct of others, and expecting much of every one. When this faith is betrayed love still HOPES, looking to man's need and God's grace; and when such hope is sadly disappointed; love continues to ENDURE. This is the very climax of love's courage and optimism.

But how can we learn so great a lesson? Only by practice. Looking at pictures does not make a man an artist; and listening to music does not make one a musician. the paints must be mixed and the instruments must be played. In like manner we can love in no other way than by loving.

"A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples." Let us therefore love as never before!

So how do we take all this truth, all these facts and do something tangible in our lives starting today? Lets call this

III. LOVE LEARNED IN THE CHURCH --

A. THE PROCESS OF LOVE:

OVERHEAD # 7

1. Abound in love Philippians 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in

knowledge and all discernment, (NKJV)

2. Be fervent in love 1 Peter 4:8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." (NKJV)
3. Be consistent in love (Phil. 2:2) Philippians 2:2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, [being] of one accord, of one mind. (NKJV)
4. Be sincere in love 2 Corinthians 8:8 I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. (NKJV)
5. Continue in love Hebrews 13:1 Let brotherly love continue. (NKJV)
6. Follow after love 1 Corinthians 14:1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual [gifts,] but especially that you may prophesy. (NKJV)
7. Increase in love 1 Thessalonians 3:12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we [do] to you, (NKJV)
8. Put on love Colossians 3:14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. (NKJV)
9. Provoke each other to love Hebrews 10:29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? (NKJV)

Paul said follow me as I am following Christ:

- *1 Corinthians 4:16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. (KJV)*
- *1 Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also [am] of Christ. (KJV)*

Literally this means PATTERN your life after mine as I PATTERN my life after Christ. Cut around me exactly as I am because I am patterning my life after Christ...

B. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LOVE:

John 15:12-16-- WE HAVE THE ABILITY FOR SELF-SACRIFICING LOVE THROUGH CHRIST (TAPE)

1. Acknowledge it is a command (Romans 13:8-10)
2. Agree you have the power (Romans 5:5)
3. Understand it is normal Christian behavior (I John 4:7-10)
4. Realize it is the Spirit's work (Gal. 5:22)
5. Practice it. (I Peter 1:22, 4:8) (Hebrews. 5:8)

REDPATH: The picture of love is a photograph of the Lord Jesus Christ in His inner Character. In His church, He wants to have many reprints. We are looking at the Original, Himself. He is looking for the perfect reproduction of His life of love in us. To love like this is to be like the Lord. Christians are those born again by the Holy Spirit, in whom the Savior has become incarnate again, for we are partakers of a new nature -- His Character, which is love.

In that excellent new book "The Discipline of Grace" Navigator theologian Jerry BRIDGES encourages us to put I Corinthians into personal actions statements. Let me share my personal action statements:

- I WILL NOT REJOICE IN SIN BECAUSE I LOVE

YOU AND I KNOW OUR HOLY GOD IS OFFENDED BY SIN AND SIN WILL HURT YOU PERSONALLY.

- I WILL TAKE PLEASURE IN THE TRUTH BECAUSE I LOVE YOU AND WANT YOUR LIFE TO REFLECT GOD'S HOLINESS.
- I WILL BEAR ALL THINGS BECAUSE I LOVE YOU AND DON'T WANT TO PARADE YOUR SIN BEFORE OTHER PEOPLE.
- I WILL BELIEVE ALL THINGS BECAUSE I LOVE YOU AND WILL BELIEVE THE BEST ABOUT YOU, NOT JUDGING YOU WRONGLY. I WILL HAVE FAITH IN YOU.
- I WILL HOPE ALL THINGS BECAUSE I LOVE YOU AND KNOW THAT GOD IS SEEKING YOU AND YOU ARE MADE FOR GOD; I WILL NOT DESPAIR OF YOU BECAUSE I KNOW YOUR NEEDS AND I KNOW GOD'S GRACE.
- I WILL ENDURE ALL THINGS BECAUSE I LOVE YOU AND THE LOVE OF CHRIST IS ETERNAL; JESUS ENDURED ALL OPPOSITION AND PERSECUTION AND PRAYED ON THE CROSS FOR HIS ENEMIES. LOVE NEVER DIES.

Conclusion: We must take Christ and His love, into our homes, into the Marketplace, into our family life. In essence, into every relationship of life. This is only possible as He who is love is shed abroad in our hearts. This is not a passive resignation. It must be an active participation on our part.

Our Lord Jesus said in John. 13:35, “By this all will all know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” We must take Christ and His love into our churches, into our homes and into our neighborhoods. Into every relationship of life. THIS IS POSSIBLE AS WE WHO IS LOVE IS SHED ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS.

REDPATH: This has been a photograph of Jesus Christ and perhaps you have felt Him looking into your own heart and asking about the reproduction of His love in your life. If you would learn to live like this, first you must receive that love into your heart. You must come to Jesus, take Him as your Lord and yield to Him.

Does this photograph find you out? Does it show your life to be the reverse of everything that Jesus is? If so, I can tell you that grace can triumphantly make you just like this, as you yield yourself to Him.

W. Graham Scroggie, born in 1877, a noted Bible teacher who pastored in the British world analyzed the Virtues of Love as follows:

Love is not Hasty, but Patient.
Love is not Inconsiderate, but Benevolent.
Love is not Envious, but Content.
Love is not Boastful, but Unostentatious.
Love is not Arrogant, but Humble.
Love is not Rude, but Courteous.
Love is not Selfish, but Self-forgetful.
Love is not Irritable, but Good-tempered.

Love is not Vindictive, but Generous.
Love is not Malevolent, but High-principled.
Love is not Rebellious, but Brave.
Love is not Suspicious, but Confident.
Love is not Despondent, but Undiscourageable.
Love is not Conquerable, but Indomitable
William Scroggie, 1877

*“Love Divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown.*

*“Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.*

*“Finish then Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let it be;
Let us see Thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee.*

*“Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!”*

Charles Wesley (1747)