



1 Corinthians 13:4-5 A More Excellent Way Part 2 *Patience, Kindness, and Putting Others First*

July 27, 2014

Text: 1 Corinthians 13:4-5

Review:

- Our text's focus is on *agapē* (Greek for *love*), which basically means, "an affectionate benevolence." Because the word is so connected to the character of God, many simply define it as "unconditional love."
- 1 Corinthians 13 is essentially a "contextual interruption" of the Spirit's teaching through Paul on spiritual gifts. It is a divine pause in the midst of corrective instruction to ensure the hearer is framing and connecting the teachings to the right place (Christ) and will go forward in obedience with the right motives (a humble, loving, and submitted heart).
- "The more excellent way," Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 12:31, grammatically is "the way of love." In context, every gift should be used in love and every command obeyed in love. **Without love, the ultimate point of gifts, and essentially everything else, is ultimately missed!**

Today's Text: 1 Corinthians 13:3-5

Initial Thoughts:

1. It cannot be stated enough how critical these verses were to Corinth if they were to truly and properly receive the Spirit's instructions. Friends, it is no different for us or any other church.
2. **It is our LOVE for our LORD that drives us to mature obedience; it is our LOVE for one another that causes us to hate one another's sin, to move to forgive and restore one another, to rejoice and mourn with one another, and to love each other deeply.**
3. Remember, in Corinth they spoke in tongues but put up with illicit sexuality (1 Cor 5); they prophesied but had issues with understanding basic ordinances (1 Cor 11) and idolatry (1 Cor 8-10); they loved wisdom but weren't wise enough not to destroy their brothers (1 Cor 8) with their "freedom". In other words, there was lots of spiritual stuff going on, but foundational love was lacking!
4. The Church of the LORD Jesus Christ must never allow this to happen!
 - *Col 3:12-14 ESV* Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, (13) bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (14) **And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.**
5. Paul is about to explain to the Corinthians the sort of love he's referring to. Let us take heed as well!

Our Text:

(1Co 13:4 ESV) - Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant

1. First, love is **passive**. It "suffereth long!" (KJV) In this manner, biblical love looks like the love of God who, in forbearance, DOES NOT give us what we deserve! Hallelujah!
 - a. *Rom 2:4 ESV* Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?
 - b. *2Pe 3:8-9 ESV* But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (9) The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
 - c. Many times, love simply waits, and waits, and waits, and waits...and often for

- someone who doesn't deserve the waiting!
- d. We too are called to demonstrate this sort of Spirit-empowered love (Gal 5:22-23) towards one another.
2. Second, love is **active**. It is intentionally caring and compassionate (kind). It reaches out! It acts! It moves! It gives! It serves!
 - a. *1Jn 3:18 ESV Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*
 - b. *Joh 3:16 ESV "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*
 - c. *Gal 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*
 - d. *Gal 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*
 3. Love refuses the way of envy and pride! It fights the fleshly desire to be haughty.
 - a. Pride was a major issue in the Corinthian church. They fought over the prominence of their teachers, their knowledge, their use of gifts, and their social status.
 - b. Love does not allow rivalry among the brethren or spiritual competition in the church. How appropriate in light of the context of gifts! Love by its very nature, exudes **humility**.
 - c. There are so many verses that call pride a sin. It is the source of the Devil's Fall (Isa 14:12-13, one of the seven deadly sins (Pro 6:17), and is absolutely opposed by God: *"1Pe 5:5 ESV Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."*
 - d. Our Lord, the pure definition of love, humbled Himself...

Php 2:3-8 ESV Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. (4) Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. (5) Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- e. His suffering is our example! His service is our example! His willingness to submit to the Father's will is our example!
- f. I love this quote by Andrew Murray:

"And so pride, or the loss of this humility, is the root of every sin and evil. It was when the now fallen angels began to look upon themselves with self-complacency that they were led to disobedience, and were cast down from the light of heaven into outer darkness. Even so it was, when the serpent breathed the poison of his pride, the desire to be as God, into the hearts of our first parents, that they too fell from their high estate into all the wretchedness in which man is now sunk. In heaven and earth, pride, self-exaltation, is the gate and the birth, and the curse, of hell.

And so the life of the saved ones, of the saints, must needs bear this stamp of deliverance from sin, and full restoration to their original state; their whole relation to God and man marked by an all pervading humility."

(1Co 13:5 ESV) -or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

1. Love speaks to others **honorably**.

- a. It does not fuss or cuss!
 - b. *Eph 4:29-32 ESV Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. (30) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (31) Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. (32) Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*
 - c. *1Pe 3:14-15 ESV But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, (15) but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,*
2. Love causes one to be more concerned about **others** than oneself; it puts others first.
- a. Again, look at Philippians 2.
 - b. *Php 2:3-4 ESV Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. (4) Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*
 - c. What wonderful (and hard to do) verses! Yet again, this is the heart of our Lord, who didn't just say it. He did it.
 - d. What would our homes and churches look like if this is how we rolled!? Instead, it is all too common to hear "Sometimes you got to do what you have to do" and "You have to love yourself." The "go for mine" mindset invading the church?!
3. Love is not easily **provoked** (KJV). In other words, it doesn't allow a default reaction of irritation and resentment.
- a. This simply means friends that biblical love is **slow** to **anger**. This too is the character of our God...

Psa 86:15 But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Joe 2:13 ESV and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

- b. We too are called to walk in this sort of love and grace.

Pro 14:17 ESV A man of quick temper acts foolishly, and a man of evil devices is hated.

Pro 14:29 Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.

Ecc 7:9 Be not quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools.

Jas 1:19-20 ESV Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; (20) for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

- c. When we walk consistently in biblical love, we don't "just go off!" 😊 It should take quite a lot to ruffle our feathers in the normal day-to-day activities of life.
- d. A Christian shouldn't easily "lose it" or quickly get aggravated with others. Help Lord! 😊
- e. Love should shield us from such things; when this happens, our love for Christ and one another becomes the bond that promotes and preserves unity.

1Pe 3:8 ESV Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a

humble mind.

Eph 4:1-3 ESV I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, (3) eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Lord, help us all to love more this way. In Jesus' Name, amen.