

# LOVE

*Borrowed heavily from a lesson plan Eric Mendoza wrote on 1 Corinthians 13*

Often people have a wrong idea of love.

Some view love as just an emotion that is characterized by butterflies in their stomach when they spend time with someone they care about.

Others feel unloved because of the way they have been mistreated others.

1 Corinthians 13 presents to us a biblical definition of love – God’s love.

## **Read 1 Corinthians 13**

1 Corinthians presents to us how we are to display love in our lives.

The Greek word that is used for love in Corinthians is “agape”. “Agape” is a caring, self-sacrificing commitment which shows itself in seeking the highest good of the one loved.

Jesus Christ modeled love (agape), by sacrificing Himself on the cross for you and me to have eternal life. This is the greatest act of selflessness that has ever been recorded in history. Paul shows us that this is the way we ought to be as followers of Jesus.

Selfless love is patient. That means we are to be patient and understanding with everyone – even those who are difficult to love. If someone does something to us, we are not to seek revenge and retaliate.

People are not perfect, and they have imperfections that will sometimes cause us to get annoyed and irritated. Agape love will not come down hard on them or snap at them. Instead it will give them time to change, and give them room to make mistakes.

It is being patient as God is patient with us.

Selfless love is kind. When we are patient with someone, we are showing them kindness. An example of kindness is being willing to forgive and help others in a way that will help them grow. This will go a long way in life because kindness is often repaid with kindness. Jesus gives us a perfect example when He tells us to love our enemies. I recognize that the person we are kind to, may not be kind back. However, God tells us that when we do good to others, He notices, even if no one else does.

Selfless love is not jealous or envious and does not boast. Have you ever gotten jealous of someone? Have you ever become jealous because others got more attention than you do? Most of the fights or disagreements we encounter are rooted in jealousy. Think about that for a minute. We could avoid many difficult situations if we would learn to be content with what we have and what we receive.

Selfless love is not arrogant or rude. Arrogance means that we think we are better than someone else. It is pride that causes us to think more highly of ourselves than we should.

Selfless love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful. It does not always insist that things need to be done our way or the highway. It is taking what others say into consideration. When things don’t go your way (news flash it doesn’t always go your way) don’t be quick to be irritated. We are not to blow up on someone because it isn’t the way we wanted.

Don't resent someone because of the decision they made. These all sound like common sense, but often, we fail when it comes to displaying the kind of love that Jesus modeled for us. We have to be reminded that Christ showed this type of love for all of us.

Selfless love does not rejoice in wrongdoing. Forgive and move on, don't bring up situations where others did something against you. When we do this, we are telling the other person that we didn't really forgive them. God forgives us for everything we have done against Him, so surely we can forgive others and not keep a record of what they did against us. I love the reality that God does not keep a record of the sins we have done against Him.

Selfless love rejoices with the truth. If someone turns away from the sin in their life, you should rejoice and celebrate with them. We are to rejoice when someone tells us they have listened to God and God is working in their life.

Selfless love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. If someone confides in you with a problem or a secret, bear it. Hold onto it, don't run and tell others. Be a person that can bear the burdens of someone else, because you will be helping them and showing them love.

Believe and trust people. I know that people will break that trust at times, but be willing to give them the opportunity to win that trust back. Don't allow rumors to be the truth, instead, trust that if you were meant to know the truth, it would be told to you.

Hope in all things. God has given us a great hope in Him. When we struggle, hope that God has everything figured out because guess what, He does.

Finally, endure. There are going to be some tough times in life. There will be times when you think that you can't take it anymore. There will be times when you think you should walk away from your faith. People may betray you, and they might abandon you. Look at what happened to Jesus; in the final hour all of His disciples ran away. One of the disciples even denied knowing Him.

Biblical love has a high standard. We must strive to love the way Paul calls us to love because this is the love that God has shown to each of us.