

PURSUE LOVE

"Pursue love," I Corinthians 14:1. Pursue means to try to find, strive for, seek after. "eagerly pursue and seek to acquire [this] love make it your aim, your great quest".

Charity

Agape (God's kind of love) is not a feeling; it is action: it is an act of the will.

Love is Charity: it's something you give away expecting nothing in return.

KJV version says it this way:..."and have not charity".

The **King James Version** uses both the words **charity** and **love** to translate the idea of... God gives man the power to act as God acts (God is **love**), man then reflects God's power in his own human actions towards others.

Paul list several characteristics of what love **is not**. The active verbs tell us that love does not habitually behave in these ways. **These following actions cannot be an ongoing pattern of our behavior:**

Definitions and comments of what scripture describes that "love is not"

Vs4 Love does not envy. A simple definition of *envy* is "to want what belongs to someone else." A more thorough description of *envy* is "a resentful, dissatisfied longing for another's possessions, position, fortune, achievements, or success."

The Bible says envy is an act of the flesh, the result of human sin:

Love finds contentment in whatever state it finds itself; therefore, to envy or be jealous of another is to declare discontentment with who you are or what you have. That basically is saying, God you have made a terrible mistake; you have not been kind to me. Therefore, I will be jealous of others. In the case of the Corinthians, they were jealous of those in the congregation who had gifts they lacked. **Envy** can easily apply to anything – good looks, status in life, musical talent, someone's spouse and just about anything that you think you have been short changed by God. But further, envy, can lead to a deep longing to the betterment of oneself **while also be willing to harm the person you envy**. For example, make yourself look good by back biting and tearing down the reputation of the person you envy. **Love does not** focus on personal desires. It is not eager to increase possessions. **God's type of love is selfless**, not selfish envy. "**Envy rots the bones**" (cancer) ([Proverbs 14:30](#)). When we crave what someone else has rather than being grateful for what God has given, **we hurt ourselves**. Instead of envying others, we are called to love them

Envy neutralizes God's work in us because envy and jealousy are fueled by our selfish ambitions that create our anger and bitterness. For the Christian, envy is to be repugnant! It is a rotten fruit that lacks God and His Truth as well as wisdom; it seeks power and prestige for self and forsakes our Lord and His call. Envy and jealousy will cause broken relationships and dysfunctional churches. Envy produce evil such as adultery, thievery, slander, conflict, harm to others, and murder that leads to chaos and the destruction in the Church ([Prov. 11:18](#); [Rom. 12:9](#); [1Cor. 2:6-15](#); [Gal. 5](#)).

love does not boast: means to be a braggart or a windbag.

Notice, braggart is the other side of envy

Rather than be jealous about others, just brag about yourself. Bragging is an inordinate desire for

drawing attention to or having an overestimation of oneself, your group, your leader, etc. It is one thing to invite others to rejoice in your accomplishments; your gifts, etc.; it is quite another to go fishing for the praise, the admiration or the applause of men. **Love relies on God's way**, as [Proverbs 27:2](#) says, **Let another praise you, and not your own mouth**; a stranger, and not your own lips. The Corinthians were vaunting the showy gifts. "I speak in tongues." But some also boasted in their party leader, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Peter." Or, "I follow Christ." Unfortunately, what often happens with this kind of boasting is also the desire to win others to our side. That is why there were divisions in the church at Corinth. However, we may boast, if in anything or anyone other than the Lord, **it is not love**. Any attempt to make ourselves or our group look good is in fact diminishing the worth of others that aren't like us. The reason that love does not boast is simple: love is focused on the loved one, not on oneself

Love is not proud or puffed up:

Proud means conceited, or arrogant. One of the most serious forms of "vaunting" is the sin of pride. "Pride is a 'my will' rather than 'thy will' approach to life."

"puff up" or "blow up." The English idiom **"having a big head"** communicates the same idea. To be puffed up is to have an inflated opinion of oneself.

Proverbs summarize God's attitude regarding pride: "Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate" ([Proverbs 8:13](#)), and, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" ([Proverbs 16:18](#)). "A proud man then is a kind of glutton upon himself; for he is never satisfied with loving and admiring himself; while nothing else, with him, is worthy either of love or care" This is exactly why love and pride are in disagreement to each other. In pride we become the objects of our own love; in humility we learn to love others. A person with godly love is not concerned with benefiting himself. The only thing love sees is the need. The opposite of pride is humbleness, meekness, submissiveness or teachable. ... With pride, there are many curses. With humility, there come many blessings." . But pride cannot coexist with godly love.

Vs5 Love does not behave itself unseemly: The Greek phrase could literally be translated **"does not act unbecomingly" or "does not act inappropriately."**

Rudeness is rooted in selfishness. Manners are meant to reduce the friction of human interaction; discourtesy reveals a lack of consideration for others. The ill-mannered person is communicating that "it's all about me." Love, by contrast, cannot be selfish, for the simple reason that love is concerned for the other person's well-being.

Christian love does not seek to cause problems, and it does not belittle others. Christian love involves choosing appropriate actions and responses that help other people. Therefore, love is mannerly.

Love seeks not her own: literally means **"does not seek the things of itself."**

Love "does not insist on its own way"

This was evident in the Corinthian church's **divisiveness** regarding leadership, its attitude toward Paul, its attitude toward legal issues with other Christians, its attitude toward the Lord's Supper, and its attitude

toward spiritual gifts. Paul wanted these believers to stop focusing on their own needs and preferences and serve God and one another. The one who loves is willing to **forgo recognition** and lay down his rights for the sake of the loved one.

The corrective to self-seeking is God-seeking. The remedy for selfishness is love.

Love is not easily provoked: love is not easily angered, fretful or resentful, irritable or touchy. Instead, love is self-possessed and in full possession of its feelings and actions.

A person with a “**short fuse**,” who becomes angry easily, is not showing love. Love is called “patient” in verse 4 (both love and patience are listed as [fruit of the Spirit](#) in [Galatians 5:22-23](#)). Patience includes the ability to tolerate weaknesses in others without readily expressing anger. “Love covers over a multitude of sins” ([1 Peter 4:8](#)); **it doesn’t fly off the handle at every provocation.**

Anger itself is not sinful but **can quickly lead to sinful expressions.** For this reason, Paul wrote to the Ephesians, “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry” ([Ephesians 4:26](#))

Rather than pretend that we will never feel angry, Scripture simply says to be “**slow to become angry**” ([James 1:19](#)). God is “slow to anger, abounding in love” ([Psalm 86:15](#)). The truth that God is measured in His wrath is immediately followed by the truth that He overflows with love. The connection between the two is obvious. Love puts the brakes on anger, slowing it down for the sake of the one loved.

Being hot tempered usually involves making snap judgments, seeking instant vindication, and refusing to grant second chances. However, true love refuses to jump to conclusions, take revenge, or hastily judge anyone.

Love does not think evil.

love keeps no record of wrongs. “It takes no account of the evil done to it. It pays no attention to a suffered wrong.”

” Paul wrote that love “keeps no record of wrongs.” In fact, it is better to be cheated than to be unloving. Jesus Christ provided the ultimate example of this type of love. On the cross He paid the price for the sins of the entire world. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us ([Romans 5:8](#)). Jesus kept no record of wrongs; rather, He prayed, “Father, forgive them,” from the cross as He died ([Luke 23:34](#)).

[Colossians 3:13-14](#) also ties forgiveness to love: “**Forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.** Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” **Refusing to keep a record of wrongs is a clear expression of God’s love and forgiveness.**

So often, people say they love each other, but, as soon as one gets angry, out comes the list of past sins! Accusations fly, painful memories are dredged up, and bygones are no longer bygones. This is not love. **True, godly love forgives and refuses to keep track of personal slights received.** The focus of love is not one’s own pain, but the needs of the loved one.

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth

love does not rejoice at wrongdoing

Love rejoices in what is right and good. Anything that covers up sin or seeks to **justify** wrongdoing is the opposite of godly love. Love does not sweep sin under the rug. Love does not try to find ways to get away with bad behavior, and it does not put up with injustice. Instead, it treasures truth, celebrates good

behavior, and promotes virtue. True love has nothing to hide.

Further, to “not delight in evil” carries the idea of not gloating over someone else’s guilt. It is common for people to rejoice when an enemy is found guilty of a crime or caught in a sin. **This is not love. Love rejoices in the virtue of others, not in their vices.** Sin is an occasion for sorrow, not for joy.

Rom 13 says it like this; this behavior and character of a Christian is of the flesh (the natural man), it is sinful and devilish and is the works of darkness. The command is to “cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light”.

- ¹² *The **night** is far spent, the **day** is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*
- ¹³ *Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.*
- ¹⁴ *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Galatians 5:16-24 says **this**: that they which do such things **shall not** inherit the kingdom of God.

- ¹⁶ *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*
- ¹⁹ *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,*
- ²⁰ *Idolatry, witchcraft, **hatred**, **variance**, **emulations**, **wrath**, **strife**, **seditions**, **heresies**,*
- ²¹ ***Envyings**, murders, drunkenness, **revellings**, and **such like**: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

The kingdom of darkness

Sinful behavior: If your character and behavior are the **works of darkness** (walking in the flesh),

the devil has a legal inroad into your life

- your ministry gifts will fuse out and die. You will become as verses 1-3

	My ministry (spiritual gifts & abilities)	My wrong character	Results
Vs1	If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels	but didn't love others	I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
Vs2	If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains	but didn't love others	I would be nothing.
Vs3	If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it	but if I didn't love others	I would have gained nothing

- Ephesian 4:27 and give no opportunity to the devil.

- **1 Peter 5:8** Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour
- **Genesis 4:6-8** ⁶ And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou **wroth**? and why is thy countenance fallen?
⁷ If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, **sin lieth at the door**.

These scriptures describe the Christian whose character is of the flesh

- **Matt 6:24** says: *can't serve two masters*
- **James 3:11-12** ¹¹ Doth a fountain send forth at the same place **sweet water and bitter**?

¹² Can the fig tree, my brethren, **bear olive berries**? either a **vine, figs**? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

1Cor. 13:1-3 make the point that love is a necessary ingredient in all ministry.

- your ministry gifts will fuse out and die without love.
- Verses 4 (first 2 attributes), 6b and verse 7 describe the behavioral and characteristics for ministry

Gal 5:22 God has given us His love to love act on your will

Pursue Love

Ephesians 5:2

² *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.*

John 13:34

³⁴ *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.*

The key to overcoming the flesh is to crucify the flesh and walk in the Spirit:

- ²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*
- ²³ *Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*
- ²⁴ *And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*

Conclusion

What does the Bible say about pursuing love?

"Love is patient, love is kind. It **does** not envy, it **does** not boast, it is not proud. It **does** not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs." ... "Let **love** and faithfulness never leave you; Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

To **pursue love means** to act with intention and purpose. It **means** to **love** for the sake of loving, **with no expectation of something in return**

Keep in mind 1Corinthians 14:1; "**pursue love** and desire spiritual gifts".