

“A MORE EXCELLENT LOVE”
1 Corinthians 13:4-7

INTRODUCTION

Members of the Corinthian church were believers in Jesus and thus saved. Functionally, however, they were not sanctified in character or actions. They were not active enough in their actual fellowship with Jesus. The Lord wants each of His saints to display the glory of God and be less like the world. The key to a quality relationship with God is to abide in Christ! That is how we will bear fruit! Unfortunately, many people are being destroyed spiritually by a wrong, worldly definition of love.

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY

This famous chapter in the book of Corinthians gives us 14 descriptions or characteristics of love in **verses 4 through 7**. 1) Love **suffers long**. This indicates that love demonstrates patience despite the difficulties. It doesn't give up. It's for better or worse! (*Abusive relationships are the exception to this, however*). 2) Love is **kind**. It is easy-going, not unreasonable in its expectations. “My yoke is easy and My burden is light”, **Matthew 11**. 3) Love **doesn't envy**. It is not jealous, but content. This love doesn't try to analyze what is, or is not fair. 4) Love **doesn't assert itself**. It is unassuming and doesn't draw attention to itself. It's not in a power struggle or try to manipulate. 5) Love is **not puffed up**. It doesn't have an overinflated view of itself, or think itself superior. There is no competition and it looks to praise others. 6) Love **does not behave unseemly**. It is polite, courteous, not rude, sarcastic or crass. 7) Love is **not easily provoked**. Some people are easily offended, easily angered or touchy. With them, it's like walking on eggshells. Mature Christians should not behave this way! 8) Love **thinks no evil**. This is thinking the best of others, not being suspicious. We don't know the motives of others, so don't hold a grudge! 9) Love **rejoices not in iniquity**. It doesn't like sin. It corrects when necessary, speaks up about evil things. Love cannot be silent! 10) Love **rejoices in truth**. It's not who is right, but *what* is right? Do we pass on rumors that are not proven true? 11) Love **bears all things**. It can take the brunt or absorb hurt without allowing resentment to build up. It doesn't strike back! 12) Love **believes all things**. It is not gullible, but does give others the benefit of the doubt. 13) Love **hopes all things**. It is optimistic and hopeful. It sees the positive. That's the way Joshua and Caleb were as spies in the Promised Land. They had the good report of what God could do for the children of Israel. A bad attitude and pessimism can wreck a home and a church. 14) Love **endures all things**. Agape love can outlast any challenge. This is like the house that is built on the Rock!

CONSIDER

As Paul wanted to see more love in the lives of the Corinthians, we must recognize that it is the Holy Spirit that produces love in the believer. It's a fruit, *but* we have to cooperate with Him. Don't draw the line or limit your own growth. Also, we must not allow sin to reign in us! *How does your life measure up in the light of this description of biblical love?* Inevitably, trials will happen to us, but in **James 1:1-3** it says to “count it all joy”. God will mature us in these times if we don't avoid them! Choose the more excellent way!

PRAY

- * That the men of the fellowship would be strengthened as they gather together on Feb. 22nd.
- * That members of the church would experience and grow in the love written of in chapter 13.
- * That the leaders of our state would promote life in the laws that they pass!