

# LOVE (VS.) SELFISHNESS

(Foundation Scriptures)

1. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loves is born of God and knows God." (I John 4:7)
2. "And this commandment we have from Him, that he who loves God loves his brother also." (I John 4:21)
3. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." (I John 3:18)
4. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loves another has fulfilled the law." (Romans 13:8)
5. "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." (Romans 12:10)
6. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another." (John 13:35)
7. "But as touching brotherly love you need not that I write to you; for you yourselves are taught of God to love one another." (I Thessalonians 4:9)
8. "If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well." (James 2:8)
9. "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart." (I Peter 1:22)
10. "Let brotherly love continue." (Hebrews 13:1)

## WHAT IS LOVE? (Three Kinds Described)

1. EROS – Physical passion and sexual gratification.
2. PHILOS – Affection for someone because of pleasure received (I scratched your back, now you scratch mine.)
3. AGAPE – This is the word used for love in Galatians 5:22 which means:
  - ◆ Affection for someone based on the inherent value or worth of that person.
    - It is not based on any pleasure received, but for the value of them alone.
    - It is a disinterested benevolence.

## WHY IS THIS FRUIT SO IMPORTANT?

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing." (I Corinthians 13:1-3)

## WHY SO IMPORTANT? BECAUSE...

1. Gifts without love is all vanity.
2. It is sound without meaning if a person speaks in tongues with no love. It does not register.
3. The life of the individual must coincide with the manifestation of the gifts or the gifts are meaningless.
4. Ministry isn't worth one cent if the body of Christ is not benefited.
5. To the extent we have personal gain as our motive, agape is out of the picture. To the extent we have agape as our motive, personal gain is out of the picture.
6. Philo produces pleasure in self, while agape produces pleasure in others.
7. Agape says, "God use me and bless me so others will be blessed, edified, strengthened and encouraged."

### **THE IMPORTANT BACKGROUND OF I CORINTHIANS 13**

Paul was dealing with the Corinthian problems when he wrote I Corinthians 13...

1. There was an over abuse of the gift of tongues.
2. There was division between certain parties.
3. There was envy of each other's gifts and responsibilities.
4. There was selfishness supreme (believers were suing each other).
5. There was impatience in public meetings with one another.
6. There was pride (some were puffed up because God was using them).
7. There was behavior (a lack of fruit) that was disgracing the Lord.

### **AND GOD MAKES IT CLEAR...**

- ◆ (V. 1) That you can be used in the gifts of the Spirit,
- ◆ (V. 2) That you can possess mountain moving faith,
- ◆ (V. 3) That you can even give all of your possessions away,  
AND STILL BE ZERO IN THE SIGHT OF GOD!!!

### **HOW? (Or) WHY?**

Because love is not the motivating force and primary vein flowing through your life.

Because without love, what you say or do, isn't worth too much.

Because without love, you cannot have an audience with God or people.

Because love is the "circulatory system" of the Body of Christ.

### **THE FRUIT OF LOVE SO BEAUTIFULLY DESCRIBED (I Cor. 13)**

1. **"Love is very patient."** it suffers long and is never hasty. It is me being long tempered, and allows me to get along with those who differ from me in many ways. God is patient with us

for sure, how can we be any less with others? This love allows me to remain calm and peaceful instead of telling someone off.

2. **“Love is very kind.”** Love is helpful, friendly and eager to show kindness. Kindness is the shock absorber of life. This fruit is the opposite of crude, rough, harsh and abrasive.
3. **“Love does not envy, it is not jealous.”** It is not disturbed by the prosperity of others. It rejoices in the well-being of them, and is free from jealousy because of another’s position, popularity or possessions. This love leaves you totally contented.
4. **“Love makes no parade.”** It never vaunts itself. Never shows off, talks big or makes a display. Love never calls attention to oneself, but always leads one to exalt Christ.
5. **“Love is not arrogant, is not puffed up.”** Love is not proud, haughty or conceited. It is never inflated with one’s own importance. It is conscious of the fact that everything we possess has been given us by God.
6. **“Love does not behave itself unseemly.”** Love is never rude or ugly. It never allows us to act in a way that brings reproach upon Christ. It is functioning at gas stations, bus stops, bank lines, restaurants, at home and in the church.
7. **“Love does not insist in its own way.”** Love is never selfish. It constantly gives and serves; wanting nothing in return. It never seeks to gratify itself, but seeks another person’s welfare. Agape love places others before self. It enjoys building the kingdom of God even at the expense of personal sacrifice.
8. **“Love is not provoked.”** Love is not easily irritated, it is not quick tempered, it is not touchy. Love makes it hard to get mad. This love has replaced hastiness, and jumping to conclusions. This love holds steady when provoked, injured or aroused to be angry.
9. **“Love thinks no evil.”** Love cannot harbor a grudge. There’s no place in heavenly living for a family feud. Love does not take account of a wrong suffered, it does not keep score. Love forgives and forgets. Wow!
10. **“Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.”** Love doesn’t take pleasure in another’s fall. It feels no joy in seeing faults committed by others. Love never compares to another man’s failure to esteem himself.
11. **“Love bears all things.”** Love is always ready to cover up; never dig up another’s fault. It also can stand the attacks of others. This love insulates and blocks out criticism about another when it comes my way.
12. **“Love believes all things.”** Love believes in the best of everybody, it always gives the benefit of doubt. This is not being gullible; it simply means we lean to the good side and are optimistic. This love never puts another in a bad light.
13. **“Love hopes all things.”** This love is an encouragement; it hopes for victory in everyone. It never tries to compete, but will always anticipate the very best in the other person. It never takes pleasure when someone is defeated or falls. It is never critical or judgmental.

**14. "Love endures all things."** Genuine love holds on under all stress, it stands any kind of pressure. It will always look at the value in the other person, it just cannot be eliminated. It is not regulated by what is done to it, but by God's grace towards me.

**15. "Love never fails."** In heaven when all the gifts of the Spirit will no longer be necessary, love will continue to be exercised; it simply never ceases!!!

#### **WHAT MAKES ALL OF THIS POSSIBLE TODAY?**

- ◆ Because we have experienced God's love at Calvary when we didn't deserve it.
- ◆ Because His love came our way and was disinterested love.
- ◆ Because Christ loved us and died for us; not because we were good and deserved it.
- ◆ Because just the opposite is true; while we were sinners with nothing to offer, Jesus died for you and me.
- ◆ Because Agape love cannot be stopped, dented or eliminated; for this love always wants and acts in the best interest of the object it is directed to, whether it is returned my way or not.