

The Core of Charisma

Chapter 7

Audio Lesson: New Testament #50



Objective: To understand the importance of love and why the resurrection is essential to Christian faith.



Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

—1 Corinthians 13:4-8

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Peter, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time.

—1 Corinthians 15:3-6.

Paul offered many solutions to the problems he addressed in 1 Corinthians, but he offered one solution that can be applied to every spiritual problem Christians can face. That solution is love.

There are several Greek words for love. The word Paul uses is *agape*. This word is the one that describe the way God loves us and the way we are to love others when we are bearing the fruit of God's Spirit. It is hard to define this kind of love, but we can describe its qualities. That is what Paul does in chapter 13.

Chapter 15 is the resurrection chapter of the Bible. Although these Corinthian Greeks were believers, their cultural heritage among Greek philosophers continued to impact their thinking, and they doubted the supernatural—especially the resurrection of Christ and of all believers. Paul reminded the Corinthians that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was a vital part of the Gospel he preached and that they had believed. This was the Gospel that saved them and was the foundation of their entire belief system.

1. True or false? According to Paul, it is more important to exercise spiritual gifts than to demonstrate love for others.
2. True or false? The evidence that the Holy Spirit has come upon us is the gifts of the Spirit.
3. True or false? The evidence that the Holy Spirit is within us is love.



4. Which of the following are characteristics of love?

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Jealousy | Truth |
| Pride | Impatience |
| Hope | Trust |
| Perseverance | Selfishness |
| Protection | Boasting |
| Patience | Accusation |
| Anger | Endurance |
| Kindness | |

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. *Agape* love is _____. (choose all that apply)

- Indestructible
- Unconditional
- Inspirational
- Irresistible

6. Which of the following describes the difference between *agape* love—God’s kind of love—and human love?

- God’s love is based on feelings, but human love is based on intellectual decisions.
- God’s love is unconditional, but human love is conditional.
- God loves only some special people who do many good deeds, but humans apply love to almost anyone.
- God’s love changes often, but human love is persistent and durable.

7. In what way do people with *agape* love inspire others to be better?

- They see the best in everyone.
- They criticize until people change their ways.
- They demand improvement in others.
- They cause people to believe things that are not true about themselves.

8. What does Paul mean when he says that love never fails?
 - a. Christians never fail to love others.
 - b. Those with real love never stop feeling strongly for others.
 - c. Real *agape* love is irresistible and indestructible.
 - d. When we love people, they always love us in return.

9. According to Paul, which is the greatest of the following three spiritual attitudes?
 - a. Faith
 - b. Hope
 - c. Love
 - d. None is greater than the others. They are all equal.

10. What two facts are essential parts of the gospel? (choose two of the following)
 - a. Jesus was an important spiritual leader.
 - b. Jesus died for our sins.
 - c. Jesus was a persuasive teacher.
 - d. Jesus rose from the dead.

11. How strong is the evidence for Jesus' resurrection?
 - a. Very weak—only a few people speculated that He might have been raised, but no one saw Him.
 - b. Somewhat weak—His disciples said they saw Him after He had been raised.
 - c. Somewhat strong—a few people in addition to His disciples said they actually saw Him after He had been raised.
 - d. Very strong—Jesus appeared numerous times to the twelve disciples and many other people, even more than 500 people at one time.

12. Which Christian belief did the people of Corinth have particular difficulty believing?
 - a. The belief that every Christian could receive spiritual gifts.
 - b. The belief that Christians can have wisdom from God.
 - c. The belief that Christians will one day be raised from the dead.
 - d. The belief that Jesus might return again one day.



Have you ever seen anyone demonstrate *agape* love in his or her relationships? If so, in what ways is it different from other kinds of love? In what ways can you demonstrate that love to someone you know?



Thank God that His love is unconditional, inspirational, indestructible, and irresistible. Pray that you would experience His love more deeply each day. Ask Him to give you opportunities to show *agape* love to others.



Going Deeper

1. According to Paul, what things are not as great as love? _____

2. Why is love greater than faith and hope? _____

3. Why is love greater than spiritual gifts? _____

4. Why is it that if I have all these things, without love I am nothing and everything I do is unprofitable? _____

5. What are the 15 virtues that Paul profiles in verses 4-7 that are an analysis of the love of which he is writing? _____

6. How can you apply those virtues to someone you want to love, such as your children, parents, marriage partner, other believers, unbelievers, people with whom you have an adversarial relationship, and your enemies? _____

7. What is the only dynamic that makes it possible for us to love in these ways? (Consider 1 John 4:16) _____
