

# Abiding in Love: Part II

## (Love is Hard Work)

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### Intro: Husbands get it wrong every time:

A man observed his wife, looking at herself in the mirror. Her birthday was the next day so he asked what she'd like for her birthday.

- **'I'd like to be six again'**, she replied, still looking in the mirror.
- On the morning of her Birthday, he arose early,
  - **Big bowl of Lucky Charms,**
  - Took her to **Six Flags theme park.**
- He put her on **every ride;**
  - The **Death Slide,** / **The Wall of Fear,** / The **Monster Roller Coaster,** etc.
- **Five hours later** they staggered to **McDonald's**
  - For a **Happy Meal** / **extra fries** and a **chocolate shake.**
- Then it was off to a **movie,**
- **popcorn,** / **a soda pop,** / favorite candy, **M&M's.**
- Finally they **wobbled home** and **collapsed** into bed—exhausted.
- He asked, **'Well Dear, what was it like being six again?'**
- Felling queasy she said, **"I meant my dress size, you dummy!!!!"**

**Today:** I want to talk about **love** again, hoping we **can get it right.**

### My Goal for Antrim:

- To develop a church that is doctrinally sound, spiritually healthy, productive and pleasing to God.

### Texts:

#### **John 15:9-11** ESV

**9** “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. **Abide in my love.**

**10** If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

**11** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

#### **1 Corinthians 13**

**1** If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

- 2** 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.
- 3** If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.
- 4** Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant
- 5** or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;
- 6** it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.
- 7** Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- 8** Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.
- 9** For we know in part and we prophesy in part,
- 10** but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.
- 11** When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.
- 12** For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.
- 13** So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

### **Notes:**

**This greatest description of love** was written by the Apostle Paul—a man who faced

- **Constant rejection** by his family, friends and nation.
- **Chased** from city to city by would be **assassins**.
- **People dogged him, trying to destroy** his life's work.
- **Bore hardened scars** in his body from **beatings**.
- **Years in prisons** for crimes he never committed.
  - **No trace of cynicism**
  - **He remained undaunted** in his commitment to love God and people.
  - **He did not write** as a **poetic dreamer** but as a **rugged realist**.
  - Not allowing bitterness, he **won the right** to have the **Holy Spirit write unmatched words** about love.
  - **What shaped Paul's grasp of love? Not people . . . rather, God's love**

### **Master Outline:**

1. The **Bane** [**Blight, Curse, Downfall**] of Selfish Love
2. The **Blessing** [**Approval, Bounty, Praise**] of Serving Love
3. The **Benediction** [**Amen, Approval, Blessing**] of Selfless Love

## **1. The Bane of Selfish Love**

### **1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

**1** If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

**2** 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.

**3** If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

### **Notes:**

- The early church had people **flaunting their gifts**. **Improper use.**
  - **We could add other things to flaunting gifts**
    - Quarreling / Dissention / Spreading discord / Speaking out of order / Gossiping / Spreading one-sided impressions about people
- The **Holy Spirit's work** is to **unite us as one** in Jesus Christ
- **Paul is calling** the early church to **stop its elitist actions** over gifts and to become **one by the ultimate gift of love**.
- **The disgrace of God's people** from the early church down through the ages has been the readiness to divide over every imaginable issue or problem.
  - **Paul said** that such people are
    - **Noisy gongs**
    - **Clanging cymbals** and
    - **Gain nothing**.

## **2. The Blessing of Serving Love**

### **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

**4** Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant

**5** or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

**6** it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

**7** Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

### **Fifteen Characteristics**

(six positive . . . nine negative statements)

### **VITAL NOTES:**

- **Life is filled** with **difficult situations**:
  - In **homes**
  - In **church**
  - In **workplace**
- **This list** does not suggest that we passively allow improper behavior to rule. It reveals the nature [disposition] by which we are to handle difficult situations in life, i.e. **in fighting a bear don't become a bear.**
- **Jesus**, whom we are to be like, dealt with nasty, angry, hate-filled people. He spoke forthrightly to them, correcting them for their own sake. But his motive was always one of everlasting love—**example**: Jesus called Pharisees “**white washed sepulchers.**” Their wives probably assured them they were wonderful men. Their wives may have been sending them to hell whereas Jesus desired them to know the truth that could get them into heaven.
- **You and I are expected by God** to do the same—speak truth in love!.

## **The Fifteen Characteristics of Love**

### **1. Love is patient**

- **Patience produces**
  - Little debt
  - Little anxiety and worry
  - Thoroughness
- **Patience is rooted in the belief that God works all thing in his time**

### **2. Love is kind**

- Kindness says, **I am doing this from my heart**

### **3. Love does not envy**

- Envy shows up as a **critical spirit**

### **4. Love does not boast**

- **Boast in the Lord**

### **5. Love is not arrogant**

- **Wrapping conversations around to ourselves**

- Wanting to be sure people know **how important we are**
- Flaunting our abilities

## 6. **Love is not rude**

- Rudeness is **disregard** and **disrespect** for one of God's children. It's our way of saying the other person is not important.

## 7. **Love does not insist on its own way**

- **We are not convinced that if we die to our way God will always work his way**

## 8. **Love is not irritable**

- **Irritability** is when we feel lousy and think everyone else should feel lousy

## 9. **Love is not resentful**

- **Sometimes we cannot find resolution in this lifetime.** Can we walk away from a fractured relationship with no malice, resentment or ill-will?

## 10. **Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing**

- Two wrongs never make a right.
  - **Example:** To rejoice when a doctor who performs abortions is murdered is to rejoice in wrongdoing.

## 11. **Love rejoices with the truth**

- Love doesn't speak in circles
- You know exactly where a person is—no manipulation or craftiness

## 12. **Love bears all things**

- Love takes on the weightiest intrusions as a privilege
  - **Children** intrude on your freedoms
  - **Aging parents** require time that could be used on yourself
  - **No self-vindication:** Insults and misrepresentations are not returned, but quietly born. Love trusts God to vindicate.

## 13. **Love believes all things**

- **Love is not gullible** but it always

- Gives the benefit of the doubt
- Gives opportunity for repentance
- Grants every effort at reconciliation

#### 14. Love hopes all things

- **Hope is the power to not fatigue in faith** when the going gets tough for long stretches of time.

#### 15. Love endures all things

- **It takes insult** without retribution
- **It ignores offenses**
- **It outlasts every crisis**

### 3. The Benediction of Sovereign Love

#### 1 Corinthians 13:8-13

**8 Love never ends.** As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.

**9** For we know in part and we prophesy in part,

**10** but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

**11** When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.

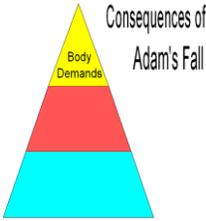
**12** For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

**13** So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the **greatest of these is love.**

#### Notes:

- **Love is eternal—and gains eternal reward.**
  - **Failure to live out the fifteen characteristics of love** results in
    - **Noisy gongs**
    - **Clanging cymbals** and
    - **Gain nothing.**
  - **You can gain the reward of love** simply practicing it where you live

## Call to Action What makes true love so difficult?

<p>1.</p>  <p>Before Adam's Fall</p> <p><b><u>Spirit</u></b> <b>Dominated</b></p>	<p>2.</p>  <p>Before Adam's Fall</p> <p><b><u>Soul</u></b> <b>World Experience</b></p>	<p>3.</p>  <p>Before Adam's Fall</p> <p><b><u>Body</u></b> <b>Temple of God</b></p>
<p>4.</p>  <p>Adam's Fall</p> <p><b><u>Spirit Collapsed</u></b></p>	<p>5.</p>  <p>Adam's Fall</p> <p><b><u>Soul Collapsed</u></b></p>	<p>6.</p>  <p>Consequences of Adam's Fall</p> <p><b><u>Body Dominates</u></b> We became slaves to our bodies</p>
<p>7.</p>  <p>Consequences of Adam's Fall</p> <p><b><u>Soul Demands</u></b> (We think and act Emotionally more than with truth and fact—reality is distorted)</p>	<p>8.</p>  <p>Consequences of Adam's Fall</p> <p><b><u>Spirit is Starved</u></b> (Our spirit was created for a relationship with God. When this is neglected enormous problems erupt in our emotions and in our relationships)</p>	<p>9.</p>  <p>REDEMPTION Proper Order Restored</p> <p><b><u>Redemption Restores</u></b> (When our sanctified spirit commands our souls how to think and feel, and controls our bodies, we will enjoy personal well-being, proper relationships and, often physical healing)</p>

**Note:** It is the work of every believer to bring every thought into captivity to Jesus Christ and to love as he loved.

**Story: We only have a short season together—we can't control the future but we are responsible for the present.**

- Large church with a well-known pastor
- Minister of music did crusades with us
- Sadly, the church of thousands is a mere shell today
- My friend and the former pastor can only say, "We had a great season."
  
- This is our season together. By love we can make it a great one.