

A More Excellent Way

1 Corinthians 13

Sermon Three: A More Excellent Way Described: Part Two (vv. 5-6)

February 28, 2021

Opening ILL: Love is the theme in so many movies and songs. But do they always describe love effectively? Are these movies and these songs really all that helpful? Examples

I. Introduction/Review

A. A More Excellent Way Defined.

B. A More Excellent Way Described.

1. Patient
2. Kind
3. Does not envy/Is not jealous.
4. Does not act inappropriately.

II. A More Excellent Way Described, Part Two (vv. 5-6)

Point: Love requires an object. We cannot love in a vacuum.

A. Love is not selfish.

1. What does this mean?
 - a. Dictionary.com definition: adjective. devoted to or caring only for oneself; concerned primarily with one's own interests, benefits, welfare, etc., regardless of others.”
 - b. This Greek expression οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς means exactly this, to be devoted to or caring only for oneself.
2. What does this look like?
 - a. When someone only talks about themselves.
 - b. When someone only does what is advantageous for themselves.
3. Why is it wrong to be selfish?
 - a. Because it is commanded against.
 - b. Because it belittles God in our thoughts and actions.
 - c. Because it is inconsistent with the example of Christ.
 - i. Philippians 2:5-11

B. Love is not provoked (cranky).

1. What does this mean?
 - a. Dictionary.com definition: “ill-tempered; grouchy; cross.”
 - b. This Greek word παροξύνω means: provoke to wrath, irritate pass. become irritated, angry.
2. What does this look like?
 - a. Negatively—When you get snappy with people. When you growl at people.
 - i. When somebody’s very presence sets you on edge and you just can’t stand to be around them. How on Earth could you possibly say you love that person?
 - b. Positively—When you willingly overlook the things about the people you love that would otherwise provoke you to anger.
 - i. Ill: Newlyweds or two people in a new relationship. Things that are often cute at the beginning turn into major areas of conflict later. Love looks past these things.
 - ii. Have you ever noticed how some parents seem totally unaware of how annoying their children are? Why do you think this is? Well, it could be because when we love people, it can be more difficult to notice their flaws. That can be a really good thing.

C. Love doesn’t keep a list!

1. What does this mean?
 - a. The Greek phrase here [οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν] literally means: “to account wrongs.”

- b. It refers to a lack of forgiveness or a desire to build an ongoing case against somebody.
 - i. Ex: Have you developed a complex in your mind, and had become so convinced that people see you in a certain way, that one little comment can set you off? “I knew you thought that way! Finally, it all comes out into the open!”
- 2. What does this look like?
 - a. When you are arguing with your spouse about who drank the last of the orange juice and before long you are arguing about something his/her mother said 25 years ago! ☹️ Have you ever had that experience in arguing, where you just stop and say, “What are we fighting about, again?”
 - b. God, in His grace, did not account wrongs to us!—2 Corinthians 5:19
 - i. **2 Cor 5:18-19** Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

D. Love does not Rejoice in Sin

- 1. What does this mean?
 - a. The Greek phrase here [οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ] means what it says here, “Does not rejoice in unrighteousness.”
 - i. This means that love doesn’t rejoice in things that are sinful.
 - a) We have to be really careful about what we are celebrating!
 - a) ILL: Ireland—people dancing in the street when they legalized abortion. Something is just off, there! I realize that they think that something good was accomplished, but
 - ii. This means that loves doesn’t rejoice when sinful people get what’s coming to them.
 - a) **Proverbs 24:17-18** Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; ¹⁸Or the LORD will see it and be displeased, And turn His anger away from him.
- 2. What does this look like?
 - a. When you see sin in the world (who doesn’t?), mourn over it, don’t celebrate it.
 - i. **Romans 1:28-32**
- 3. What is the connection between love and rejoicing in sin?
 - a. Sin is always destructive.
 - i. John Owen: “Sin is a cloud that spreads itself over the face of the soul, and intercepts the beams of God’s love and favour. It takes away all sense of the privilege of our adoption.” (Voices from the Past 2/24)
 - ii. John Owen: “Sin untunes the heart by entangling its affections. It diverts the heart from the spiritual frame that is required for communion with God. Sin fills the thoughts with its enticements. It captures the thoughts, and if unmortified it seeks to make provision to fulfill the lusts of the flesh.”
 - b. Sin always belittles and dishonors God.

E. Love Rejoices in the Truth

- 1. What does this mean?
 - a. The Greek phrase here [συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ] again, simply means, “Love rejoices together with the truth.”
 - b. This seems to mean that love and truth are not enemies, but friends.
 - i. Sometimes it feels like love and truth are at odds.
 - a) **Galatians 4:15-16** Where then is that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?
 - ii. Sometimes we forfeit the truth because we have abandoned love.
 - a) **Ephesians 4:15** but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,
 - iii. Sometimes we give lip service to a love that is not real.
 - a) **1 John 3:18** Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

2. What does this look like?
 - a. This means that we delight in things as they are, not as we hope they would be.
 - i. ILL: The difference between marriage and dating. When you are dating, you only see the good. That may be more attractive, but it's not the whole truth. Once you've been married awhile, well, you see a whole different side of things.

III. A More Excellent Way Applied

A. Pay close attention to what you are paying the most attention to.

1. Love requires an object—what you focus on is what you love.
2. Philippians 1:3-11

B. Pay close attention to the weapons you use in conflict.

1. How you disagree with people shows what you love.
2. Galatians 5:14-15
3. Romans 12:19-23

C. Pay close attention to what brings you joy.

1. Where your treasure is shows what you love.
2. Matthew 6:21