

Galatians 5:6 says, *"If you are a follower of Christ Jesus ... All that matters is your faith that makes you love others"* (CEV).

God says what matters in life is not your accomplishments or your achievements or your fame or your wealth. All that matters is your faith that makes you love other people. He says if you miss that, you have missed the most important thing in life.

1 Corinthians 13 is one of the most inspiring chapters in the entire Bible. God presents us with a description of what love really is (and what it is not). The opening verses of this chapter show us how love ought to be the highest priority of our lives.

- 1. If I don't live a life of love, nothing I _____ will matter.**
1 Corinthians 13:1, *"If I speak human or angelic tongue, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal."* God says words without love are just noise. God is not impressed with how great of a communicator we might be. He wants to know if we love.
- 2. If I don't live a life with love, nothing I _____ will matter.**
Vs. 2: *"I may have the gift of prophecy. I may understand all the secret things of God. I may have all knowledge. But if I do not have love, then I am nothing."* You may be a genius. But God says if you don't have love in your life, all that you know is worthless.
- 3. If I don't live a life with love, nothing I _____ will matter.**
There's a myth that being a follower of Christ is just a matter of believing certain truths. That is not true. Following Christ is much more than believing intellectual facts or doctrinal truths. It's a life of love. The Bible says, *"Even if I have the gift of faith so I could speak to a mountain and make it move, I will still be worth nothing at all without love."* The Bible teaches that we cannot say we are right with God and be out of sorts with other people. Relationships with others affect my relationship with God.
- 4. If I don't live a life of love, nothing I _____ will matter.**
"If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, but I didn't love others, I would be of no value whatsoever." Can you be in a relationship and give for selfish motives? Absolutely, you can. Giving is not necessarily always loving. Some people give just in order to get back. That's not love.
- 5. If I don't live a life of love, nothing I _____ will matter.** 1 Corinthians 13:3 in The Message paraphrase says, *"No matter what I say or what I believe or what I do, I'm bankrupt without love."* The Bible says relationships are more important than accomplishments. Someday, God is going to evaluate your life on one basis – your relationships. God is going to ask, *"How much did you love Me and other people?"* That's the Great Commandment.

HOW DO YOU DEFINE "LOVE"?

- **The Bible says that love is a _____.** God commands that we love each other. It's not optional. If we don't do it, the Bible says that we are sinning. 2 John 1:6, *"Love means doing what God has commanded."* **Love is not a _____.** We know that because you cannot command a feeling. Love is not a feeling. It creates and produces feeling. God would never command you to do something that He doesn't give you the power and the ability to do.
- **The Bible says that love is a _____.** We choose to love, and we choose to not love. It's a choice. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 14:1 that we are to *"pursue love."* It's a volitional act of the will. Love is a choice. That destroys another myth that we have about love. We think love is uncontrollable (i.e. *"I fell in love."*). Acting in love when you don't feel like it is actually a higher level of love than when you do feel like it. **Love is giving a person what they need, not what they _____.** That's what God does.
- **The Bible says that love is a _____.** It's a behavior. It's a way of acting. Love is something you do. The Bible says in 1 John 3:18, *"Let us stop just saying we love people. Let us really love them and show it by our actions."*
- **The Bible says that love is a _____.**
1 John 4:16 says, *"God is love. If we keep on loving others, we will stay one in our hearts*

with God and He will stay one with us.” Our relationship with God is largely affected by our relationship with other people. Love is durable. Love keeps on giving whether you like it or not.

Paul takes the concept of love and allows us to see 15 aspects of it. These 15 descriptions are all verbs, or action words. Love is not just some idea; you can actually see it working. What does love look like?

1. Love is _____.

This is a word that is used to describe not how you respond to circumstances, but to people! It’s a word that describes someone with a long fuse. The King James Version uses the word “Longsuffering.” Longsuffering develops in your life when you “suffer long.” Patience is the oil that takes the friction out of life.

2. Love is _____.

The word “kind” used here means: “useful, serving, gracious, active goodwill that not only desires the welfare of a person but works for it.” Just as patience will *take* anything from others, kindness will *give* anything to others. Kindness is the insignia of a loving heart.

You can spot a real Christian not by how he treats his _____ but by the way he treats his _____. How do you treat those who cannot further your agenda? Kindness is the ability to love people more than they really deserve.

3. Love does not _____.

Love does not have an inferiority complex—always wanting what others have and is never satisfied with what they have. The word “jealous/envy” here means “to have a strong desire.” One of the hardest battles a Christian must fight is that battle of jealousy. There is always someone who is potentially a little better than you are. When love sees someone who is popular, successful, beautiful, or talented, it is glad for them and is never jealous or envious. If you do find yourself jealous or envious of another person, it is a sign that love is not in your heart towards them.

4. Love does not _____.

This Greek word for brag (*perperuomai*) is used nowhere else in the New Testament. It means that love does not parade its accomplishments; it does not call attention to itself. Bragging is the flip side of the coin with jealousy. **Jealousy is _____ what someone else has. Bragging is trying to make others _____ of what we have.** A person who brags is an inferior person with a superiority complex.

5. Love is not _____.

This verb literally means “puffed up” and whereas bragging about yourself deals with your actions, arrogance deals with your attitude. It is an inner attitude of exalted opinion about oneself. It’s an unrealistic idea of one’s own importance. The emptiest man in all the world is the man who is full of himself. D. L. Moody said, “I believe firmly that the moment our hearts are emptied of pride and selfishness and ambition and everything that is contrary to God’s law, the Holy Spirit will fill every corner of our hearts. But if we are full of pride and conceit and ambition and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God. We must be emptied before we can be filled.”

6. Love does not behave _____.

Paul is saying that love has manners. The verb for “behaving rudely” means to behave shamefully or disgracefully. Another way to put it would be to say that “love is tactful in its expression.”

7. Love does not _____.

A person with true love in their heart always puts the needs of the other person ahead of themselves.

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2. Love is kind.

The word “kind” used here means: “useful, serving, gracious, active goodwill that not only desires the welfare of a person but works for it.” Just as patience will *take* anything from others, kindness will *give* anything to others. Kindness is the insignia of a loving heart.

You can spot a real Christian not by how he treats his king but by the way he treats his servant. How do you treat those who cannot further your agenda? Kindness is the ability to love people more than they really deserve.

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